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BRIEF

PRESENTED TO

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

BY

THE EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOL LOCAL

of the

ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

APRIL 15, 1958

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FOREWORD

The Edmonton Public School Local of the Alberta Teachers' Association welcomes the appointment of the Royal Commission to study elementary and secondary education in Alberta. We feel that the work of this Commission is of utmost importance, not only to all Alberta teachers and pupils but also to all Alberta citizens. This Local wishes to assure the Commission of its full support in the conduct of the inquiry and, at the same time, to express its appreciation of this opportunity to present the views of the teachers in the public schools of Edmonton on certain aspects of the educational scene as they relate to the situation in our metropolitan and industrialized area.

The Edmonton Public School Local, an autonomous body within the Alberta Teachers' Association, is the professional organization of the teachers in the public schools of Edmonton. Its policy is developed through a Local Council which is composed of an executive committee, school representatives elected on a proportional basis, and a representative elected by the supervisory staff. The governing body of the organization, the Local Council, is composed of 167 representatives elected from a total membership of 1336 teachers. Early in 1958 the Executive Committee of the Local authorized the preparation of a brief embodying such suggestions as were not inconsistent with official policy from individuals and groups of teachers. This brief, thus, may be said to present the considered and official opinions of the teaching profession in the public elementary, junior high, and senior high schools of the city of Edmonton.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. believes that Albertans have reason to be proud of their educational system. It has been developing for well over half a century. Millions of dollars have been, and are being, spent to provide adequate school buildings, equipment and special services. Today, the magnitude and complexity of the institution, which exists for the sole purpose of educating our children, is impressive. Curricular programs and teaching procedures have steadily conformed to the changing concepts of desirable education for the masses. They have been adapted to meet the changing conditions as our frontier society slowly evolved into a prosperous agrarian society.

Time and again the school program has been challenged by those who question its purposes and its methods. Usually it has emerged stronger from these onslaughts than it was previously because its own leaders have been its severest critics and because improvement from within has been accepted procedure. Such improvements have been gradual; sudden, dramatic changes have been frowned upon and seldom have been successful.

The last few decades have been marked by many significant developments. Alberta was the first province to adopt the large unit of school administration and to centralize teacher training in the Faculty of Education rather than in the Normal Schools.

This province was early in the field of the enterprise and unit techniques of teaching as well as teacher participation in curriculum committees. Alberta was one of the first provinces to inaugurate the junior high schools and composite high schools. Today, membership in the professional organization is a condition for teaching, there is a definite trend toward salary schedules which recognize equal pay for equal professional education and teaching experience, and collective bargaining is recognized as a practical procedure. Considered as a whole, education in this province has many such unique and distinctive features which should be valued and preserved.

It is now generally agreed, however, that an accurate assessment of our educational program is overdue. The time has come for a reappraisal of the education system in order that the curriculum and teaching procedures, as well as the organization, administration and supervision of instruction may be evaluated as to their efficiency and adequacy with a view to effecting necessary improvements.

Proposals for the improvement of education in Alberta must take into account the powerful influence which is being exerted by changing social and economic conditions on the purposes and requirements of our system of education. In the past, the fertile soil and favorable climate of Alberta facilitated the development -- by sturdy pioneers -- of the thriving agricultural communities which are the basis of the provincial economy. In that phase of its development, the present system of education came into being to meet the needs of a predominantly rural population. But in the past

decade, there has been a striking growth in urban and suburban areas -- a growth which was adequately delineated in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Metropolitan Development of Calgary and Edmonton.

Urbanization of the rapidly growing population has been closely associated with the unprecedented industrial development of the province which has taken place as a result of the exploitation of our natural resources. The rapid growth of secondary industries and specialized services which accompanied the expanding gas and oil industry has placed Alberta in a very strong economic position. In this respect, it is worthy of note that the Government of Alberta is financially able to support a much higher standard of educational services than the one which now exists.

It is with some trepidation that we present our recommendations and suggestions for the improvement of education in Alberta. For teachers to point out defects and suggest changes in matters relating to the schools is to invite deliberate misinterpretation by some elements of society. We definitely wish to avoid leaving anyone with the impression that present practices in our schools are without value. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Much in the school program is worthy of praise and preservation.

At the outset, we wish to impress upon the Commission that at no time has there been stagnation in education in Alberta. There is ample evidence available that over the years there has been a definite lack of complacency on the part of all concerned with the operation of our schools, and that there always has been a vigorous

effort to promote the steady improvement of curricula, teaching procedures, supervision and administration.

A surprising number of people are talking and writing and arguing about education with little knowledge of the basic educational situation in their own community. It is good that such controversial topics as the product of our school system be discussed freely and openly, but the ease with which publicity can be obtained by a misinformed few and the wide audience available to them by press, radio and television makes it imperative that the facts be made available to these critics before they pontificate on matters pertaining to education.

One of the common attacks made on the educational system is, "The schools are neglecting the fundamentals." It is asserted that students, either dropping out or graduating, cannot write legibly, cannot compose a simple letter, cannot spell, and cannot do simple arithmetic. Rarely is any valid evidence given to support these charges. When evidence is cited, it usually amounts to several isolated cases or is a quotation from some disgruntled parent, employer, politician, teacher or instructor of university freshmen.

Defenders of our educational system usually reply to the critics by saying that research has shown that students today read better, write more legibly, have greater competence in arithmetic, and spell better than the young people of any other era. This is easy to say, but difficult to substantiate because there is insufficient objective research available on the Alberta situation to provide a basis for

legitimate comparison. Unfortunately, both the critics and the defenders have to employ the same techniques -- making claims without proof that is statistically valid.

The eventual solution to the problems of education probably lies much deeper and certainly is more complex than most people realize. It will require something more than satirical diatribes to phrase the issues and solutions. It will require first-hand knowledge of what is going on in the schools -- not word of mouth reports, not generalizations isolated from the context of the research. It will require time, patience, skillful investigation and the cooperative efforts of the very best minds we have.

We must not overlook the probability that the feeling of discontent in relation to the schools has its main roots in problems which have their source in the extension of general education to all the children at all levels of the system. To educate a select few is a relatively simple matter; to educate all children, with their wide diversity in abilities, is a complicated task. Only direct experience as a teacher or administrator in a large urban school can develop a full appreciation of the magnitude of the task and clarify the nature of the associated problems.

If free public education of all children at all levels of the system is to improve, it will be necessary to evaluate, to modify, to adopt, and in some cases, to reject parts of the education system as it now exists. An apathetic acceptance of the present program is just as dangerous to the lasting interests of public education as that attitude which would throw out all the good features which have been painstakingly built up over the years.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. anticipates that, in a matter of such vital public concern, the Royal Commission will make use of every means at its disposal to do justice to the task which lies ahead of it. In our opinion, the necessary technical study and the conduct of appropriate research might require a period of several years to prepare a thoroughly comprehensive evaluation of education in Alberta, and to establish norms as a basis for future comparisons. We believe that every thoughtful citizen is entitled to all the information that can be made available, and we sincerely hope that the final report of the Royal Commission will provide the facts in detail.

CHAPTER II

THE KINDERGARTEN

In advocating the establishment of kindergartens, the Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. is concerned with the lack of education for 5-year-old children. For reasons associated with sensory-motor development, and because of a lack of manual coordination and conceptual development, these children have not been admitted to the regular elementary schools. We are convinced of the value of kindergarten programs as a supplement to both the home and the school. Kindergarten training serves a most useful purpose in expanding the opportunities for development which are found in the good home and, where necessary, to remedy deficiencies of the home environment. There can be no doubt that kindergarten training establishes a firm foundation for the entrance to the first grade of the elementary school.

Naturally, no formal instruction in subjects or subject-matter content would be given. The program, while organized, would be largely informal, and the half-day sessions would be divided into brief, alternating periods of routine and play. In consideration of the immaturity of the pupils concerned, attendance should be on a voluntary basis and they should be housed in readily accessible neighborhood schools. Only fully certificated teachers should be placed in charge of publicly supported kindergartens.

The nature and extent of the recommended kindergarten program are indicated in the following outline of major aims:

- (1) To assist in the development of fundamental habits of living through the acquisition of proper health habits associated with rest, play and exercise, eating, and toilet practices.
- (2) To develop and improve the use of language through listening to stories told by the teacher, relating personal experiences, looking at and discussing pictures, and communicating with fellow-pupils in play and other school situations; and gradually to develop "reading readiness" through these and similar exercises and experiences.
- (3) To assist informally in the growth of the number sense through games and special activities appropriate to particular times of the day and seasons.
- (4) To introduce aesthetic training by learning and appreciating simple tunes and rhythms; and, in art, by enlarging the appreciation and thoughtful use of different kinds of materials.
- (5) To assist moral and spiritual development.
- (6) To provide an environment in which the child may develop a feeling of security and gain a sense of "belonging", so that he becomes less and less dependent on the teacher.
- (7) To develop in the child a feeling of adequacy in meeting ordinary situations appropriate to his age by mastering the use of, and gaining confidence in his ability to handle, selected play equipment.
- (8) To teach the child to work and play with others of his own age in an acceptable manner; to respect the rights of others and to await his turn; to select materials for games and activities, to use them, and then to replace them in their storage places.

Kindergarten classes, where established, are normally for 5-year-old children. Desirable as the general provision of these facilities may be, the very high per pupil cost of education at this level is an important consideration. Because of this, and since the primary financial responsibility is to provide an adequate educational program during the period of compulsory school attendance, we do not suggest that kindergartens be made generally available. On the other hand, the large urban centers should, in view of the incidence of working mothers, be encouraged to provide educational facilities for the younger children.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. makes the following recommendations and suggestions with regard to kindergartens: *

- (1) That school boards in large urban centers be encouraged to establish kindergarten classes for 5-year-old children;
- (2) That attendance at kindergarten classes be voluntary and on a half-day basis;
- (3) That only fully certified teachers be placed in charge of kindergarten classes.

CHAPTER III

THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The elementary school normally enrolls all children of ages 6 to 12. The curriculum is organized on a six-grade basis, divided into primary and elementary divisions each of three years' duration. It constitutes the first part of what is generally known as formal education; but, although it is the basis of all later education, it is defined primarily in terms of the special needs and problems of this stage of the child's development.

In the primary division of the elementary school, the main aim is to complete the gradual transition from the informal activities of the home to the formal procedures followed in teaching the elements of reading, writing and arithmetic. Hence the methods and activities of the kindergarten are followed in at least part of the first year of the junior division. Formal education does not begin before approximately age 7, at which time school attendance, normally, is compulsory and on a full-day basis. By the end of the primary division, children have had instruction in the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and in the elementary skills of art and music; and they have been introduced to those concepts of social studies and science as lie within the range of their comprehension.

Much the same program is continued in the elementary division, with adaptations to correspond to changes in the needs of children and their increasing maturity, and with emphasis upon the development and consolidation of the basic skills. In this connection, we should

like to bring to the attention of the Commission that, although the enterprise method of teaching is in general use for activities associated with the core program in social studies, health and science, and with the related development of skills in living and working together, the "tool subjects" such as reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic are presented by more formalized instructional procedures.

During the years 1935 to 1940, the enterprise was introduced into the elementary schools of Alberta on an experimental basis. In a limited measure, the new school program attempted to embody the following and other related concepts: that intrinsic motivation is superior to extrinsic motivation, that what is done to or with a child should have regard to its emotional as well as to its intellectual effects, that tasks should be a challenge but not a frustration through being beyond the child's capacity, that the school should be concerned with social as well as intellectual experiences, that provision should be made for creative urges, that every child should be provided with activities that are commensurate with his capabilities and his legitimate interests.

May we remind the Commissioners that these ideas began to influence curriculum construction and teaching procedures at a time when strong dissatisfactions had developed with respect to such matters as the lack of attention to individual differences, the memoriter learnings, the neglect of aesthetic and creative urges, the absence of provision for non-academic types of students, the

heavy discipline, the emphasis upon competition, and the somewhat fixed pattern of content, method and organization which existed a quarter of a century ago.

The enterprise and activity method of teaching encountered difficulties: lack of knowledge of techniques, inadequate teaching staffs, limitations of time, errors of judgment, directional enthusiasms, misinterpretations, and the enormity of the steadily expanding educational task. The net result seems to be, however, that teaching methods have been improved, and that many desirable features have been added to the curriculum. These matters are not easy to assess, for quite apart from the factual questions involved, the extent and the effect of the change in the whole social environment in relation to which the school operates must be considered.

It is common practice for critics to ascribe all changes which have taken place in present day education to the zealots of the cult of progressivism as practiced in the United States. With this we cannot agree. In our education system, decisions are usually made by groups of varied composition who attempt to resolve different points of view and to apply their best judgment to the solution of problems at hand. We do not suggest that such compromises necessarily prove to be the best decisions, merely that they are not dictated by an external philosophy such as that of Dewey.

From the pedagogical point of view, the development of the enterprise method of teaching can be attributed to acceptance of the findings of psychologists and others relating to the physical, mental, and social development of children. The present elementary school

program specifically recognizes the problems created by individual differences. A flexible and suggestive curriculum permits necessary adaptations in the content of courses of study and in teaching procedures. Each teacher is permitted to develop her own blend of techniques to attain the desired goals, in accordance with her own ability and with the needs of the children in her charge. Teaching procedures are adapted to allow pupils to proceed at their own rates of learning, and to provide for varying capabilities. Nevertheless, the need for proficiency in the fundamental skills is generally accepted by qualified members of the teaching profession, and consequently, the child, within the limits of his ability, is made to master them.

The principle of enterprise education is applied by the teachers in the elementary schools of Edmonton to those areas of the curriculum in which they have found it to be practicable. In their opinion, a great deal of the dynamic qualities of children (curiosity, creativeness, etc.) are being exploited to the full by this method of instruction. Within the bounds of feasibility and good judgment, self- and group-discipline and motivation through intrinsic interest are being encouraged. At this point we should like to state emphatically that, although there may have been some poor control through lack of judgment on the part of incompetent teachers, the children have not been allowed to control the school nor have their interests been allowed to dominate the school program.

The enterprise is difficult to teach well. It is not unique in this respect but perhaps as much as any subject, it exemplifies the need for well-trained, imaginative teaching. If the enterprise is not being taught as well as it ought to be taught, the fault does not lie within the theory of the method: in classrooms where superior teachers work with adequate materials and a limited number of pupils the results speak for themselves. Three factors have tended to undermine the successful application of the enterprise technique to all areas of the curriculum: the heavy turn-over in teaching personnel, an inadequate supply of the right kind of reference material, and the overcrowding of classrooms. These limitations are not inherent in the enterprise method and should not be held against it.


The enterprise calls for teachers of real ability, experience and skill in child-management. The problem solving approach to learning, the small group attack on research projects, and cooperative teacher-pupil planning and evaluating, require teaching skills which cannot be developed in one year teacher-training programs. Better teaching of the enterprise will require longer periods of teacher preparation as well as in-service education for the teachers now in the classrooms. All teachers must be encouraged to accept more responsibility for the selection of suitable material to illustrate a resource unit and for the development of adequate teaching procedures to implement a given unit of work.

A major emphasis in the enterprise is on the exploring of a limited topic by individuals working in small groups and the

reporting of their findings to the class as a whole. There is, therefore, a particular need for a good supply of suitable reference material in broad fields of knowledge, and for the organization of these materials in classroom and school libraries. There never has been sufficient books of the right type to keep this research aspect of the enterprise in full view. Encyclopedias are too bare in outline and too adult in verbiage. Reference books at the elementary school level are far too expensive and all too frequently cover the same material or have the same omissions.

It is impossible for even the best teacher to enter into the lives of thirty to forty children and to influence their attitudes and thinking, to counteract unhealthful influences, to encourage learning, and to stimulate latent talents. Modern curricula and teaching techniques have been designed for class numbers of less than thirty. It is nothing short of travesty to expect the best results from the enterprise or any other method in overloaded classes. Although there is no definite answer to the question of what is the correct, or optimum, teaching load, the LaZerte report advocated a pupil ratio of one teacher to every twenty-five pupils. All the literature of educational research shows that the upper limit of class numbers should be about thirty. A year or two of trying to cope with a heavy class load is usually sufficient to drive another teacher from the classroom. Those teachers who survive the frustration of heavy enrollments tend to develop defence mechanisms which are not conducive to good teaching.

Lowered standards for teacher certification combined with the minimum of classroom material and the maximum number of children the classroom will hold will never satisfy the suggested need for greater efficiency in the elementary schools. Inadequately trained teachers plus poorly equipped and overcrowded classrooms are making a mockery out of the most desirable of teaching procedures and of the best planned courses of study.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends: 

- (1) That the period of compulsory full-time school attendance begin for each child on September 1st of the calendar year in which he attains the age of 6 years, provided that he has attained a mental age of 5 years 10 months when registration takes place;
- (2) That the principles of enterprise instruction continue to be applied to those areas of the elementary school curriculum in which they have been found to be practicable;
- (3) That more formalized procedures of instruction continue to be utilized in those subjects in which the content is arranged sequentially such as reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic, especially in the elementary division;
- (4) That resource booklets containing pertinent information regarding local conditions and describing Canadian examples be developed and made available to all elementary school teachers;
- (5) That an adequate supply of reference and other enterprise materials at a suitable reading level be made available to all elementary school children;

- (6) That adequate teaching aids and a plentiful supply of reference books at a suitable reading level be made available for the new elementary school science program, particularly in grades III to VI;
- (7) That acceptable standards of mastery of factual knowledge be introduced into Departmental publications so that inexperienced teachers may be informed as to what residue of subject-knowledge, as well as attitudes, skills and understandings, should remain with their pupils;
- (8) That the Committee on Educational Research in the Faculty of Education be requested to develop standardized tests and achievement norms for Alberta children to be used in evaluating progress in the elementary schools;
- (9) That the standard of elementary school teacher education and certification be raised to a level commensurate with the requirements of modern teaching methods and curricula;
- (10) That accredited teachers in the elementary schools be given even more freedom than they now have in the building of curriculum and in the selection of books and materials to implement their experimental courses of study;
- (11) That immediate steps be taken to establish the ratio of one teacher to twenty-five pupils in all elementary school classrooms, and that where a significant number of immigrant non-English-speaking pupils are in attendance this ratio be established forthwith;

- (12) That reading clinics be set up in major centers of the province to deal with children whose progress is blocked by reading difficulties;
- (13) That in view of the current findings by research workers to the effect that our children seem to be living at a very low level of physical proficiency, the Department of Education re-examine the physical education program in light of all available facts;
- (14) That the Department of Education be requested to initiate forthwith an enlightened policy for giving the greatest possible opportunities to gifted children;
- (15) That a more generous supply of free-reading books be made available in properly organized school and classroom libraries, especially in new schools where the need is most urgent.

APPENDIX A TO CHAPTER III

The Edmonton Project in Supervision

"A project in instructional improvement carried out by the elementary teachers and supervisory staff of Edmonton effectively illustrates in-service education through locally-organized curriculum studies. It also illustrates the development of local curriculum planning within the boundaries set by the provincial program of studies. The Edmonton staff has, through this project, charted a design for relationship between central and local school authorities in the curriculum field. I would like to describe the project in some detail as an example of a vital and comprehensive supervisory program.

"The planning structures have grown from the cooperative efforts of the Edmonton Elementary Local of the Alberta Teachers' Association and the supervisory staff of the Edmonton public school system. Committees of elementary school teachers have organized themselves according to interests around such topics as arithmetic, reading, language, science, social studies, and enterprise. The chairmen of these study groups form the nucleus of a city-wide coordinating committee, known as the Elementary Education Policy Committee. The chairman of this central committee is elected by the Elementary Local of the Alberta Teachers' Association; leadership to that extent remains under the control of the professional body. The personnel of the committee includes members of the city supervisory staff and, by courtesy, a representative of the provincial department. In this way liaison is maintained with local and provincial school governments.

"Ideas for study and action come from three sources: members of the supervisory staff, chairmen of the interest-area committees who are frequently principals, and teachers. The source of ideas seems much less significant than their full acceptance by those involved with carrying them out. At the outset of the project, suggestions for curriculum adaptations or changes came mainly from members of the supervisory staff; of late, however, teachers themselves have been increasingly creative in proposing and outlining suitable studies.

"The processes for planning include study groups and workshops in the various fields, with occasional lectures by selected consultants. Committees have been concerned with the development of such curriculum materials as resource units for enterprise, language, and physical education booklets, and science guides. Starting with the provincial elementary school program and working within its flexible boundaries, the Edmonton teachers have interpreted, modified, and enlarged its content to suit the needs of city students. Other activities have been the construction of objective tests and the improvement of report card and cumulative records. Inasmuch as these achievements contribute to a better learning environment they, too, may be regarded as curriculum building at the classroom level.

"A word should be said on the coordinating services of the central committee. The work of each interest-area committee is reviewed by the central body and submitted to other groups for further

study. A resource unit for the enterprise, for instance, represents the planning of several groups.

"The distinction between the centralized and centrally coordinated approach to planning resides more in viewpoints and attitudes than in organization. A relationship chart might show similar organizational structures for both approaches. In centralized planning, however, the lines of communication flow downward from a central policy-making committee, whereas, in centrally coordinated planning, ideas may be initiated at either level. Communication, as in the Edmonton project, becomes a two-way process.

"The Edmonton program as described here reflects certain principles which conform with recent educational theory and practice. The principles are, in effect, criteria by which similar projects may be evaluated. These are the principles -

1. The supervisory staff works cooperatively with teachers in the improvement of the total learning environment.
2. The teachers themselves either identify or fully accept the curriculum problems on which they are to work.
3. Curriculum adaptations are made within the scope of the provincial program of studies.
4. The experiential interpretation of curriculum building is achieved through a broader supervisory program geared to in-service education.
5. While the unit for curriculum building is the city district, the study is related closely to the interests and expressed needs of classroom teachers.

6. Supervision thus practised becomes a process of instructional improvement involving self-supervision as well as leadership from status personnel.
7. The activity of teachers as a professional group is a unique feature of the project. This Edmonton Local of the A.T.A. is performing here in a professional manner.
8. The Edmonton studies are dynamic and continuous, providing a favorable climate for thought and invention in the solution of instructional problems.
9. The supervisory program moves forward on all fronts; assisting individual teachers, organizing the total school programme; providing for in-service education, and developing curriculum materials.
10. The relationship of the provincial department to this project is one of service by providing such materials as curriculum guides and, on occasion, resource personnel.

"The Edmonton project has indicated a pattern or design for relationships between provincial and local authorities in the supervisory field. There are, of course, other projects within the province that reflect equally well the ten principles listed above. The Edmonton City district, enjoying full autonomy in supervision, presents more precisely through this program the respective roles of local and provincial leadership in improvement of instruction."

-- Extracted from Canadian Education,
September, 1957.

APPENDIX B TO CHAPTER III

THE PLACE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

by A. J. H. Powell

The purpose of this section of our brief is to bring into sharp focus the question, "What do we have school principals for?" and to urge upon this Commission the necessity of using its research personnel to find out -

- (a) What duties the Principal should be performing in a modern school system;
- (b) How much of his week should be devoted to these duties in schools of different sizes at the elementary levels;
- (c) The extent to which present administrative practices in Alberta allow the Principal the necessary time to perform essential duties;
- (d) The changes in time distribution which may be necessary in order that a Principal may fully discharge his duties.

Research in a Vicious Circle. There is a tendency, as we have already found, for research in this field to run into a vicious circle.

Some years ago a Committee of the Edmonton Administrators' Association did a massive piece of work to find out how much supervisory and administrative time was allowed to Principals in the major cities across Canada, with a view to persuading our School Board to give principals more time for the vigorous and effective management of their schools. The end of the affair was "You have as much S.A. Time as they have in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and some cities of Ontario, so you've no cause for complaint." Needless to conjecture that the same sort of research has led to the same sort of conclusion in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the backward parts of Ontario, and no progress has been made.

Redundancy in Research. It is easy for an employing body to say to its school principals: "You bring us a substantial research job on this matter of principals' supervisory-administrative time, and we will be prepared to listen to you." And since the principals involved are far too busy trying to be grade teachers and principals at the same time, the substantial research job does not get done and the case goes by default to the employer.

However, such research would be redundant anyway. Scores of competent books have been written about School Administration and Supervision, and every Faculty of Education has its professor in that field. For the purposes of this Commission we suggest that a member of the Faculty be called to give expert opinion as to the proper functions of a principal in his school.

We wish to stress that this is by no means a minor detail in Education. The dissatisfaction of the customers has already given rise to the first National Conference on Education, to a vast volume of press discussion, and indeed to the appointment of this Commission and our presence here today. In any other major industry a decline in profits would lead to the closest scrutiny of the management at the points, (a) where the product is made, (b) where it is advertised, and (c) where it is retailed to the customer. It happens that in Education all three points are in the school and all are under the principal as manager.

Why the Difference? The main question here is "Why is Education so different from any other major industry that management can be virtually dispensed with, and the manager relegated to a job in the shops?"

Let us suppose that a business house in booming times notes that its Edmonton branch is showing little vitality or initiative. It sends a representative to see what is wrong. He arrives to find the Edmonton manager sitting among his stenographers addressing envelopes - doing a typist's work on a manager's pay. There will be immediate and drastic changes in the management of the Edmonton office, and a marked upturn in volume of business.

This parable might be repeated many times over...from the straw boss of a work-crew to the superintendent of a city hospital. The person in charge is expected to use his experience, his insight, his abilities and his time to the best advantage of his employers in seeing that the subordinate personnel do a first-class job. He cannot do that if he is himself submerged in subordinate work; and his employers would be very resentful if he did so submerge himself.

Broad Functions of a Principal. The Principal is personnel manager over a staff of teachers and some hundreds of boys and girls. He is technical supervisor of the educational process in his school. He is the channel through which research, experiment and new concepts will pass into the classrooms. He is the public relations manager through his contacts with Home and School and through his interviews with dissatisfied parents. He must cope with emergencies - the child who comes to school drunk, the epileptic, the adolescent who strikes the teacher, the thief, (and we have them in the best of schools), the temporarily neurotic teacher, the school yard accident, the outraged or outrageous parent, the truant, the psychopaths of

varying degrees. He is also the statistician and the sub-purchasing agent, the student-insurance agent, the receptionist and the chief disciplinarian.

Present Practice in Edmonton. In Edmonton there are 18 elementary schools of 10-13 rooms each in which the principal teaches a grade six class seven out of ten half-days each week. These eighteen schools represent 214 classrooms in Edmonton that are getting the kind of supervision and administration which the principal can spare after devoting 70% of his time and energy to being a classroom teacher. The situation in many other Edmonton schools is comparable to this.

Present Practice Elsewhere in Alberta. In Calgary, elementary principals do much better. In Calgary the 18 principals above referred to would have not 3 half-days but 5 half-days per week of S.A. Time.

In the towns, the situation is variable, but there are (we believe) very many centres in which the principal is required to teach all the time and do his S.A. duties as best he can.

There is, if expressions in the public press mean anything, a strong feeling abroad that although millions of tax dollars are being poured into new buildings and better salaries, there is no strong forward impulse in education to show for it. To the extent that this may be true, cannot a part of the reason for it be found in the misuse of the Principals?

Times Have Changed. The very peculiar idea that education (alone of all great industries) needs little or no management at the level of production and distribution dates back to a time when there was no great body of doctrine or philosophy about what or how to teach, when the docile elite stayed in school and the rest went to work, when the ingredients of social living were the box social and the taffy-pull. In those days the view was that the principal who didn't teach would be sitting on his hands, and a teacher would have to be hired to keep his class.

Even within our own times the essential duties of a Principal have changed greatly. Twenty years ago city school boards were able to attract into their employ the cream of teaching personnel from all over the province. In those days the teachers were strong enough to be largely autonomous as instructors and disciplinarians. Staffs went on from decade to decade with virtually no turn-over, and a tradition and way of life went on placidly from year to year. Ancillary services like student insurance and mass-purchase of textbooks were unknown, and the principal might have found little to do with a large slice of S.A. time.

With the example of the cities before them, the towns were content to have as principal "a grade teacher who rings the bell".

The old conditions no longer prevail. Teachers are coming into the grade schools of the cities with 0, 1 and 2 years of experience, and this is at least equally true of multi-teacher schools throughout the province. Turnover is as much as fifty per cent in a year. Experienced and valuable staff-members are taken

away to form the staff nucleus of a new school or to fill gaps in higher-grade schools. In the quite typical case of a 15-room city elementary-junior high school, only three teachers now remain of the January 1955 staff.

Meanwhile there have been special degree-credit courses at the University in school supervision and management ever since 1929, as well as a highly-touted Principal's Leadership Conference held each summer in Concordia College. Duties of principals are a frequent subject of conference and professional articles. All the theory of our times says that principalship is a real and vital job. Nearly all the practice says that it is not important, but do a little of it if you can. It is difficult to see how such a divergence can promote efficiency. Indeed, our personal experience and observation is that so much "pressuring" of theory on one hand with so little S.A. Time allowance on the other hand is engendering a great deal of frustration and cynicism among the principals.

A Spurious Substitute for School Management. In Edmonton an attempt has been made to justify the down-grading of the principal on the ground that there are 15 departmental heads, special-subject supervisors and consultants available to visit the schools, to inject enthusiasm into the teachers and aid with problem children. This may sound impressive, but in fact the sum-total of time spent by all these extramural visiting officials in the average school is no more than 15 hours out of 1,000 hours of instruction per year. They are therefore virtually irrelevant to the question whether a

school principal should be managing his school or immured in a classroom. If a school needs management, the staff of supervisors certainly is not providing it.

Teacher Recruiting. It would be far too optimistic to suppose that the present status of school principals remains unnoticed by the young people whom we need to fill the administrative ranks of the profession in the future. The young people see Mr. X running from his class to the phone and back to his class, dashing here and there on "trouble-shooting" missions and back to his class; and to them (no matter if they respect and like him) he is, even at the top of his profession, an old grade teacher who does the extra chores. It is not an attractive picture, and the young lad who has enough brains to be good "principal material" does not find it attractive. He says, "Thanks, I'll be an engineer." One line of attack upon the continuing teacher-shortage would surely be to elevate the school principal to his proper status, so that a fair proportion of our brightest young men may see in it a challenge and a prospect comparable to those of other professions.

Who Should Be a Full-time Principal? In Edmonton the principal of a twenty-room school at any level rates 100 per cent S.A. Time.

If all principals were allowed S.A. Time proportionately on a basis "20 rooms equals 100% S.A. Time" there would be a great improvement in the professional work of the principals. At present the twelve-room principal with 3 half-days of S.A. Time can just keep the routine administration from snowing him under. With a

proportional S.A. Time allowance, $\frac{12}{20}$ of a full week or 6 half days, he would have three half-days a week for getting into the classrooms, energizing low achievers, studying behavior-problem pupils, probing for weak spots in class instruction and many other activities which tone up a school.

The preceding paragraph is not, however, intended to concede that the formula "20 rooms equals 100% S.A. Time" is an ideal or even an adequate basis for allotting principals' time. Previous research has shown that in Great Britain and other parts of the Commonwealth the principal of a twelve-room school is a full-time principal. We believe that in Alberta conditions, with the amount of training available and the strong emphasis presently being placed upon principals' functions, any school principal at whatever level of the system can occupy himself full time to the advantage of the taxpayer and the children in the management of a twelve-room school.

We believe further that principals of less than twelve rooms should be allotted S.A. Time on a just proportional basis, and that principals of more than twelve rooms should be aided by extending the S.A. allowance to their assistant-principals.

This is a Proper Matter for Legislative Concern. Some years ago our Legislature introduced into the School Act a provision that all schools of eight or more rooms should have an appointed assistant-principal. This act of the Legislature makes it quite clear that the Province may, and does, concern itself with proper provision for management within the school. It is therefore well within the powers of this Commission to recommend such legislative

action as will enable our principals to discharge the duties which the most competent modern authorities feel they should discharge.

This matter has received less than due attention for years past, and so far as we know, nobody has mentioned it in the great Canada-wide debate now going on. School boards are not interested because any reform would aggravate somewhat their problem of getting teachers, besides raising costs a little. Teachers' associations tend to give it faint support because of the frequently heard comment "Who wants principals snooping into the classrooms?" It is only by the insistence of the principals themselves that this brief is brought to the attention of the Commission, with the hope that you will weigh its argument fairly, initiate such research into modern practices as may seem advisable, and give a strong lead in the matter to the Legislature and people of Alberta.

CHAPTER IV

THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Beginning at approximately age 12, the three year program of the junior high school corresponds roughly to the period of early adolescence as well as to the final stage of compulsory attendance. For these two especial reasons, as well as for other reasons, general education is emphasized in these intermediate schools. The subjects for study in the junior high school fall into two categories: the basic subjects, which must be taken by all students; and the exploratory courses, which in theory at least, are offered to students on an elective basis.

Physiologically and intellectually boys and girls of age 11 to 13 are ready for experimentation in and expansion of educational interests. Britain and most European countries which operate on the multiple-track plan of secondary education also make the division at age 11 or 12. The setting up of an intermediate unit between the elementary and senior high schools in Alberta has made possible the evolution of a curriculum suitable to the needs and interests of young adolescents when they are undergoing rapid physical, emotional and social development. More than two decades of experience with the junior high school as a distinct unit in the educational system have convinced Edmonton teachers that there are sound reasons for its continuance as well as for its further modification to suit those needs which are peculiar to the rapidly expanding industrial centers in Alberta.

While the majority of junior high school students has secured a well rounded general education upon completion of this intermediate stage of their schooling, there is a minority who constitute a special problem because of their limited mental capacity, and other reasons. Many of this group are unable to profit from the regular courses. To meet their specific needs, the junior high school curriculum must become more diversified and flexible than it is at the present time. Their program should include obligatory courses in which the content has been adapted to their limited academic ability as well as optional courses designed to reveal their vocational aptitudes and abilities. They must be prepared, even though they cannot be given specialized training, to enter into any one of a number of occupations in trade and industry that require a relatively short period of specialized training "on the job".

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends that the Department of Education permit urban school boards to exercise initiative in the provision of specific options not generally prescribed and in the adaptation of content to meet local needs. These large urban centers possess a professionally qualified staff which can competently and efficiently discharge this task. This initiative might well be extended, on an experimental basis and under tentative approval, to include special adaptations of the content of basic subjects and exploratory courses to meet specific individual differences. While general direction must continue to come from the Department of Education, it will be within the individual school that the needs of individual students will actually

become known, the appropriate course given, and appropriate methods of instruction employed.

Our opinion is that a student who is particularly able should be granted permission to select some academic options of a preparatory nature in preference to vocational and cultural options.

Since such an arrangement would not be too general, we propose that the decision be left to the discretion of the school principal and staff.

A similar variation is suggested for those over-age students who have decided that they will seek employment upon completion of their junior high school program. In this connection, attention could be paid to the possibility of introducing what is commonly known as a "school-work" program, in which a student devotes part of his time to study in school and part to employment in some occupation. Such programs have some extremely valuable features, but their general history has not been encouraging. Difficulties arise in the administration of them, particularly when it involves cooperation among school authorities, organized labor, and employers. Nevertheless, where local economic conditions are favorable, much may be gained in the case of over-age students who have shown little interest, aptitude, or ability in the academic aspects of the junior high school program.

Methods of instruction in the junior high school vary, within limits, according to their purpose, and change from teacher to teacher. It is essential, however, that there should not be continuity as a pupil advances from elementary to junior high school. The unit method seems to be an effective teaching technique in

achieving a smooth transition from the enterprise method to the more formal methods which depend less on external motivation. It is also suggested that at least one "block" of the obligatory subjects be assigned to specially selected "home-room" teachers to offset the initial shock of departmentalization.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. wishes to make the following observations and suggestions regarding specific areas of the present junior high school program:

(1) Language

Since some of the teachers in this Local believe that language can be better taught in conjunction with English literature than with social studies, as is presently the case, we request that the "blocking" of literature and language be considered an acceptable alternative to the "blocking" together of language and social studies. We believe that blocking arrangements are most effectively decided in the school, providing provincial authorities are satisfied with the calibre of administration and supervision available at the local level.

Recent grade IX departmental examinations in language have placed considerable emphasis on grammar. Students going on to senior high schools require a sound background of grammar for the advanced study of English and of foreign languages. We therefore believe that a more specific program for the teaching of English grammar is required. While a functional approach is to be desired, neither the course of studies nor the prescribed texts give the necessary direction. For some teachers the

language program is mainly grammar, while for others grammar is to be taught only incidentally. This range is possible since the nature and extent of the program desired is poorly defined.

The prescribed texts, Words and Ideas, do not contain sufficient instructional or practice content. They are therefore of limited usefulness so far as instruction in grammar is concerned. Teachers must make up and mimeograph numerous practice exercises when they might better be employed in other essential preparation. Unnecessary preparation time could be cut considerably if the texts more closely met the teachers' and students' actual needs. This, of course, would not prevent a teacher from making and using his own practice exercises.

(2) Social Studies

Our Local believes that a more definite and extensive program for the teaching of world geography in its many aspects is necessary. Since the social studies programs for grades V to VII do not appear to place sufficient stress on geography, grade VIII and IX students must learn a great deal of geography much of which could have been learned at an earlier level. As a result the grade VIII course is unduly heavy, while the grade IX course is, if anything, even more crowded.

We do not intend or desire to minimize the importance of history or of current local, national and world affairs, but we strongly believe that a knowledge of history and of current affairs certainly cannot be gained without an adequate background of physical, economic and political geography.

(3) Science

This Local believes that the junior high school science program should be revised in the manner suggested by the provincial science curriculum committee. We endorse the trend toward greater teacher participation in curriculum construction in this province. The Department of Education is to be commended for making increasing use of practicing teachers in revising the science curriculum. However, there is still some unnecessary overlapping of content in the grade VII and VIII science courses which should be eliminated. Basic science experiments should be performed wherever possible by the students. Inadequate science facilities (laboratories and equipment) make such a procedure impossible in almost all of our junior high schools.

(4) Mathematics

This Local endorses the policy of revising the mathematics courses and accompanying textbooks, and urges that everything be done to expedite these revisions. Teachers of mathematics complain that the present courses employ the "spatter technique" in that they attempt to do too little of too much. There is a definite need for more instruction in signed numbers and other fundamental operations in algebra and arithmetic.

There would appear to be a certain amount of confusion on the part of some teachers in regard to the most efficient methods of teaching mathematics at the junior high school level. It is recommended that a detailed evaluation be made of the various

methods presently employed and that definite recommendations be made in the following areas: methods of making mathematics meaningful, methods of teaching mathematical facts, methods of presenting the major concepts in mathematics, methods of teaching the language of mathematics, and methods of obtaining the maximum value from drill in fundamental operations.

(5) Health and Personal Development

Some teachers in this Local are not satisfied with the results of the health and personal development program. They feel that since this course of studies is not regarded as an "academic" subject, many schools do not treat the course as seriously as they do some of the other courses.

It is also suggested that this course is very difficult to teach well, particularly at the junior high level. Many teachers do not feel themselves adequately qualified to teach the anatomy, physiology and hygiene involved. The personal development sections, while necessary, demand good teacher-pupil and inter-pupil relationships if they are to be properly treated.

We feel that health and personal development is one subject area where planned T.V. and radio programming could be particularly effective. Many excellent factual and motivational films exist in this field, and the present system of film distribution could be easily changed to allow classes to view selected films, panels, debates, etc. through the television medium.

Our recommendation is that health be continued on a compulsory basis in the junior high school grades and that the principal

be authorized to determine the scope of the personal development course within his own school.

(6) Oral French

Since Canada is, and will continue to be, a bilingual country, we earnestly request that serious consideration be given to the introduction of French at a much earlier grade level. We believe that every student should learn to speak simple everyday French, and that grade V would not be too early to begin such a study.

In this province French is not introduced until grade IX, and then only on an oral basis. Furthermore there is no authorized text and no course of studies to follow. This results in unnecessary difficulty for both students and teachers. Learning a language involves hearing its sounds, saying them, writing them, reading them and then using them. These steps cannot be followed when prepared materials are lacking.

Our recommendations are that French be offered on an optional basis beginning in grade VII; that there be more direction respecting the content desired in the present oral French course; and that an appropriate textbook be authorized forthwith.

(7) Exploratory Subjects

This Local believes that optional subjects such as Music, Art, Drama, Home Economics, Industrial Arts, Community Economics, and Typing should be either compulsory subjects or else genuine

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options voluntarily chosen by the students. In most junior high schools in Edmonton, one or more of these is compulsory. While we appreciate the fact that many adolescents are not mature enough to choose an option of cultural value, we feel that much of the purpose behind giving exploratory courses is lost if pupils are compelled to take a subject of this type. We realize that the provision of expensive facilities implies that they should receive maximum use, but compulsory enrolment of pupils in an optional course does not guarantee profitable use of those facilities. Further, we see no reason why a greater choice in optional subjects cannot become possible, if existing facilities are improved. Securing qualified instructors will continue to be a problem until a vigorous program of recruitment into these special fields is instituted.

We recommend that all exploratory courses for grades VII, VIII and IX be re-evaluated critically. The supply, qualifications and placement of teaching personnel, the facilities available in the schools, the suitability of the present content of each of these exploratory courses, and the administrative problems such as the scheduling of these courses, should all be very carefully examined.

(8) Increasing the Efficiency of Teaching

This Local is of the opinion that special emphasis should be placed in the junior high school on developing appropriate remedial programs in mathematics, reading, and language skills for retarded pupils. Coordination of the over-all plan should

be provided by the Department of Education, but the planning, preparation and application should be carried on at the local level. A definite status in the curriculum, adequate equipment and appropriate materials, and specially-qualified teaching personnel are pre-requisites to the successful operation of such a scheme.

We also believe that careful consideration should be given to the feasibility of streaming pupils according to their academic ability and past performance in order to more effectively teach the subject matter of the compulsory courses. It is felt that such a policy would tend to benefit both the above average and the below average pupils. Heterogeneous grouping favors only the average students.

It is our contention that more attention could be given to individual students if heavy class loads were reduced. We urge that Dr. LaZerte's optimum figure of twenty-five pupils per class be put into effect as expeditiously as possible.

We also submit that the burden of clerical work required of teachers is detrimental to efficient teaching. Preparation for the teaching of classes often has to be sacrificed to the pressing needs of tasks which could be better performed by stenographic and clerical personnel. We suggest that full-time stenographers be employed for each school.

This Local believes that the principal of a junior high school should have the necessary time free from administration, teaching, and clerical work to perform his most important

function--the general supervision of the improvement of instruction in the classrooms under his charge. The importance of both general and special supervision increases as the shortage of well-qualified and specially-qualified teachers grows apace.

Special supervisors have already been appointed in the fields of art, music, physical education, industrial arts and household economics. But there is an ever-increasing need for special supervisors in the academic subject matter areas such as the language arts, social studies, mathematics and science.

We recommend that the educational system provide for adequate supervisory personnel to ensure a high calibre of instruction in all areas of the curriculum. We urge that the program of teacher-training be revised to ensure considerable training in the specialized subject areas in which the new teacher is expected to give instruction.

CHAPTER V

Comp only

THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

For the purposes of this brief only, the Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. is concerned with secondary education as exemplified in the composite high school which, by September of this year, will be the only type of high school functioning in the Edmonton public school system. The basic educational program of all our 15 to 18 year old youth can be met in these multi-lateral schools.

We firmly believe that a more realistic approach must be taken toward the curriculum problems of these large urban high schools. These institutions were designed and constructed at great expense to satisfy the demand of our contemporary urban society that the best possible high school education be made available to all our young people. Theoretically the Alberta high school curriculum is designed to provide educational experiences appropriate to the varied abilities, aptitudes and ambitions of "all Alberta youth", but in practice it does so only in part. We feel that the restrictions imposed by the special problems of the comparatively small high school have hindered the development of a curriculum sufficiently diversified and flexible to meet the specific, and sometimes unique, requirements of large composite high schools.

It is our considered opinion that the present curriculum must be adapted to local conditions before we can successfully meet the educational needs of the maximum number of educable youth now enrolled in the composite high schools. The objective of our proposals is to ensure that each adolescent receives the type of secondary education for which he is most suited, to remove unreal

distinctions between different aspects of the educational activity and the harmful stigma which tradition has imposed on non-academic subjects, and to free the program of free general education from a possible distortion imposed by the requirements for entrance to universities.

Nothing in our brief has been motivated by any disparagement of the value of academic subjects. The modifications we propose are the consequence of a frank recognition of the fact that approximately two-thirds of the students in our composite high schools are not destined for further education at any university.

Provided they have "passed" the Grade IX departmental examinations, all former junior high school students are entitled to enter the senior high school. In practice, this means that although approximately 10% of Alberta's grade IX students fail each year, only 4% fail in the Edmonton public school system. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that junior high schools in the cities are, generally speaking, better staffed and better equipped than their rural counterparts.

The large numbers of pupils who flock into the composite high schools in the cities present a marked degree of variation in terms of their intellectual capacity, previous educational achievement, vocational aptitude, and their ambition to achieve their somewhat ill-conceived educational goals. An apt illustration of this wide diversity may be found in the fact that some students enter grade X with every mark in the H's (top 10%); others enter with marks as low as two D's (bottom 10%) and four C's (bottom 30%). Although these results are arrived at by statistical treatment and without

reference to any "absolute" standard for passing or failing, the grade IX examination marks could provide an efficient "screening" device if the appropriate statistical data were made available to the administrators of our composite high schools. The statisticians in the Department of Education determine "stanine scores" for each student in each subject. A critical score in each subject could be of real value for the prediction of success or failure in composite high schools.

We are convinced that the matriculation pattern should be reserved for only those students whose mental ability and past performance will ensure them of a reasonable chance of success in university. The present system is seriously detrimental in respect to both the course content and the classroom environment in which the matriculation program is being taught. We can see only one solution: segregation of the matriculation student in respect to courses he studies. There is no point in endeavoring to contend with the spurious and superficial argument that such a course of action is undemocratic. These students will continue to attend the same school and participate in the same extra-curricular activities as their compeers who will be engaged in their own pre-vocational programs of study. Furthermore, past experience has proved that each stream -- matriculation, business education, technical education and general education -- require specially prepared courses of study in both the core and elective subjects to meet their specific and unique requirements.

The false prestige which tradition has given to the academic subjects has perpetuated a fallacious hope among the majority of our young people and has perpetrated a hoax upon the curriculum. Parental preferment of the academic pattern forces students of average and below-average ability to enroll in the university-preparatory program. Eventually these students feign indifference and then drop out, or if compelled to remain, over-compensate by developing abnormal behavior patterns which are detrimental to both the individual and society.

At present a graduate of the junior high school may elect a matriculation program in grade X without a pre-determined average, providing he has obtained a "B" or better in science and mathematics and a "pass" in other grade IX subjects. Students in grade X may proceed to a complete matriculation program in grade XI without any check on a minimum average, and with marks of 50% in language, mathematics and science, but with all other marks as low as 40%. Students in grade XI may proceed to a complete matriculation program in grade XII without any check on a minimum average, and with marks of 50% in mathematics, science and a foreign language, but with all other marks as low as 40%. This total lack of screening between the grades does not give the marginal student a reasonable chance in the academic program because the probability of a marginal student meeting the matriculation requirements is slight. Such students continue to overcrowd matriculation classes and to interfere with the learning of those who have the necessary ability and work habits to enable them to succeed in an academic program.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends that the Department of Education be requested to publish an information bulletin for students, parents and employers. These persons must become better informed with regard to the facts about the matriculation program:

- (1) that the matriculation program is not designed for the student of average ability but rather for those students with superior ability, superior work habits, and superior motivation;
- (2) that professional opportunities are limited to a minority of gifted persons and that only one out of three in our population is capable of meeting the standards set by the professions;
- (3) that marks below 50% in grades X and XI indicate little chance of success since the grade XII matriculation standards call for a minimum average of 60% on the six departmental examinations with no subject mark of less than 50%;
- (4) that statistics covering the past five years reveal that only about one in seven of those who enter the senior high schools in Alberta actually obtains matriculation standing, 40% of all grade XII students failing to make the required mark of 50% in each subject;
- (5) that since the provincial average in each grade XII examination subject is set at about 55%, to get a University entrance average of 60%, the student must be in the top third of the candidates;
- (6) that matriculation standing carries with it no inherent or assured superiority and invidious comparisons which attach a

stigma to vocational programs are undermining the very foundations of our system of high school education.

At least two-thirds of our young people must, of necessity, prepare themselves for employment in business and industry or in other activities associated with our rapidly changing and expanding economy. The composite high schools must offer the multiplicity of co-ordinated, yet diversified, courses of study which are consistent with the ambitions, aptitudes and abilities of this majority of our students. The truly multiple-track curriculum alone seems to possess the inherent possibilities of attaining the legitimate objectives of high school education.

The submissions of groups of Edmonton high school teachers in every specialized area of the curriculum have clearly indicated that the "streaming" or "segregation" process would be better suited to the heterogeneous nature of our composite school population.

Appendix A to this chapter contains a transcript of the detailed observations and recommendations made by these groups.

The weakness in the application of the present curriculum arises from the false assumption that all students can profit equally from the same subject matter in the core program. To illustrate the point: every student, regardless of his ability, his achievement, or the pattern he wishes to follow, must take the same course in literature, language and social studies. It is admitted that teachers, to teach effectively, must adapt both content and method to the varied abilities of the members of each particular class, and this is done. But what about evaluation? It is more than

unfair to those who have been given an enriched program and tested on it to be compared in the same course number with others who have received a modified course and given an easier examination.

What is needed to strengthen the composite high school curriculum is a greater variation in subject matter designed for students in different streams. It has been suggested that there should be separate courses in literature, language, social studies and certain of the elective subjects for students in each of the different streams. Subject matter with a high degree of theoretical content, together with standards high enough to command the respect of students, parents and the public, would satisfy the needs of matriculation students. In each of the other streams, students should be able to study subject matter of a more practical nature, with less theory involved, and with standards geared to the occupation into which the student expects to graduate. The elimination of some of the theoretical subject matter would allow greater emphasis on accuracy and skill in the fundamental processes. Instead of modified matriculation subjects, these students would be studying distinct subject matter designed to meet the requirements of business or technical employment.

There are several distinct advantages to this proposal. Courses would be more real and practical to the majority of students because they would see why they were studying any particular subject. Courses adapted to the students' needs would encourage harder work through intrinsic interest, and should make for greater success and fewer drop-outs. All subject matter would clearly belong to the particular pattern being followed by each students. Evaluation

would be more realistic; students would not be required to conform to the requirements of examinations designed for matriculation students.

The success of a streaming program in the composite high school would depend upon several factors. The first is the provision for the vocational students of an adequate and satisfying program which business and industry would accept and which parents and students would welcome as a more desirable alternative than failure in a matriculation program. Secondly, there would have to be adequate screening devices, beginning at the grade IX level. Third, there would have to be ample provision for transferring students from one stream to another without loss of credits toward graduation. Perhaps the greatest requirement for success in streaming high school students is the necessity to face squarely the realization that all students are not equal in their ability, nor in their ambition, and that they cannot all study the same subject matter with an equal degree of success.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. proposes the following guides for the implementation of the "streaming" process in the larger composite high schools:

(1) Matriculation program (University entrance) -

- a. The Department of Education to be requested to determine a critical score, either as a total of stanine scores, or the critical stanine score in each of the grade IX departmental examinations, which would be used in the prediction of success or failure in any specific program of studies or particular type of subject matter;

- b. Until the above project can be implemented, the entrance requirement from grade IX into the high school matriculation program to be based on a sum of at least thirty on the stanine scores for the six departmental examinations, with the proviso that students who show outstanding ability and work habits in grade X be allowed to transfer into the matriculation pattern;
- c. The present grade X and XI pass standards to be raised to bring them into line with the requirements for matriculation standing in grade XII, pupils who fail to meet these standards to have the choice of repeating the courses or transferring into a non-matriculation program with full recognition of credits earned in the matriculation pattern;
- d. Necessary modifications to be made in the content of matriculation subjects as well as in some of the vocational subjects in order to strengthen them as an adequate background for university education;
- e. The mathematics and foreign language requirements to be restored to a standard acceptable by all Canadian universities;
- f. Upon compliance with the requirements of the High School and University Matriculation Examination Board, the successful students to receive a High School Matriculation Diploma from the Department of Education.
- g. University entrance requirements to be placed on a functional basis for specific faculties: for example, Electricity 30 might be accepted as one elective from candidates seeking entrance into the Engineering Faculty, Bookkeeping 30 might

be accepted as one elective from candidates seeking entrance into the Faculty of Commerce, Food and Nutrition 30 as well as Fabrics and Dress 30 might be accepted as electives from candidates seeking entrance into the School of Household Economics, Secretarial Training 30, Bookkeeping 30 and Typewriting 30 might be accepted as electives from students registering in the Commercial B.Ed. program, and so forth.

(2) Business Education Program -

- a. The requirements from grade IX for this stream to be at least a "B" in language, reading and mathematics;
- b. A minimum pass mark of "B" to be required in all courses associated with the business education program in grades X, XI and XII;
- c. Courses in English and social studies to be modified to meet the specific needs of the world of trade and commerce;
- d. Mathematics 11 and 21 to be modified and strengthened as business mathematics courses, and a new elective, financial mathematics, to be introduced at the grade XII level;
- e. Upon graduation from an accredited composite high school, the student to receive a High School Business Education Diploma without departmental examinations.

(3) Technical Education Program -

- a. The requirements from grade IX for this stream to be at least a "B" in mathematics and science;
- b. A minimum pass mark of "B" to be required in all courses

associated with the technical education program, including home economics courses, in grades X, XI and XII;

- c. Mathematics 12 and 22 to be modified and strengthened as practical shop courses in applied mathematics, and mathematics 32 to be introduced in Edmonton schools at the grade XII level;
- d. Sequential courses in consumer mathematics to be introduced as required subjects for students in all three years of the home economics pattern;
- e. Two new shop science courses, numbered 12 and 22, to be introduced at the grade X and XI levels as electives, with students who show ability and interest in this subject being encouraged to take physics 30 as an elective in grade XII;
- f. Standards high enough to command the respect of trade unions, technical boards, and employers in industry to be maintained in all courses in order to ensure justifiable preferment when the student enters the labor force, as well as to raise the prestige of the technical education program in the estimation of students, parents and the general public;
- g. Upon graduation from an accredited composite high school, the students to receive a High School Technical (or Home Economics) Diploma without department examinations.

(4) General Education Program -

- a. The requirements for entrance into this stream to be the grade IX Diploma issued by the Department of Education which is evidence of promotion by the High School Entrance Examinations Board;

- b. A minimum prerequisite pass mark of "B" to be required in all courses associated with the general education program in grades X, XI and XII;
- c. Sequential courses in language, literature, social studies, mathematics and science to be specially designed to meet the functional and basic needs of students of below-average ability;
- d. A wide range of elective courses in the vocational fields to be offered at all three grade levels to discover, develop and challenge the latent, and sometimes unique, aptitudes, abilities, and ambitions of these young people;
- e. Having accumulated 100 credits in a pattern approved by the principal of an accredited composite high school, the student to receive a High School General Education Diploma without departmental examinations.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. also strongly recommends that accredited composite high schools, particularly in the urban areas, be granted a greater degree of local autonomy in effecting changes in the high school curriculum. We would agree that the various Curriculum Committees of the Department of Education should continue to determine the general aims and objectives for all curricula and to exercise supervision over the general content of the courses of study. But the details of particular subject matter, the establishment of achievement norms other than on departmental examinations, the correlation of actual achievement with stated aims and objectives, the correlation of educational theory with classroom

practice, and all other related details, should be entrusted to professional teachers who are in the employ of urban school boards. In some of our composite high schools there are more students, and certainly more teachers with university degrees, than there are in some of the school divisions.

We appreciate the fact that the centralized pattern of curriculum construction in this province is not necessarily rigid or undesirable. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the High School Curriculum Committee in November 1952 passed the following resolution:

"That this committee agrees that any teacher who wishes to depart from the organization of a given course may do so provided he uses the prescribed textbook or primary reference and sincerely attempts to achieve the general and specific objectives set forth in the curriculum guide issued by the Department of Education; and further, if any local administrative unit wishes permission to depart further from the directives of the Department, it may do so upon application of the superintendent to the Director of Curriculum."

This resolution was approved by the Department of Education officials and may be taken as their policy. Furthermore, the program of studies in use in Alberta does offer and encourage teachers to employ their own initiative, judgment and originality in implementing certain phases of the instructional program. The curriculum guides continually call upon classroom teachers to use their training and ingenuity in the hope of attaining a more stimulating classroom environment.

But there is another aspect to the centralized origin of curriculum which is not quite so apparent to persons other than those engaged in the implementation of the curriculum in the composite high schools. The official regulations are designed for all "standard instruction-time high schools" which are defined as schools in which

there are one or more high school teachers per grade. Of 199 standard instruction-time high schools in the province, 190 have pupil populations ranging from less than 100 to 600 each, and the other nine have pupil populations in excess of 600 each. It is our contention that the needs of the 190 relatively small high schools with a total enrollment of approximately 20,000 students continue to overshadow the unprecedented requirements of the nine relatively large high schools which compose only $4\frac{1}{3}\%$ of the standard instruction-time high schools, but serve approximately 10,000 students or $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ of the students in this type of high school.

Examples of traditional practices which may be requisite and necessary in the small high school, but which we deem to be an unwarranted imposition on the administration of the large composite high schools, may be found in those regulations which state,

- (a) that high school programs must be accredited through departmental staffs of high school inspectors, and
- (b) that textbooks must be adopted, authorized and distributed through a central government agency.

To illustrate the first example, the following quotation is made from the "Special Note to Principals" on page 19 of the Senior High School Handbook 1957-58:

"Although permission for students to depart from the rules laid down in the High School Regulations is rarely granted, a principal who wishes to submit, for special consideration, the name of an individual student whose program appears to be undesirably restricted because of a rigid application of certain regulations, may apply direct to the appropriate Inspector of Schools.

In addition, all matters pertaining to school programs, which in any way depart from usual procedures, should be taken up with the High School Inspector concerned..."

These regulations are obviously well intended, but could not possibly have been written for large composite high schools. During registration week in a composite high school, it would be physically impossible for all programs requiring such changes to be submitted to a High School Inspector.

It is our contention that in large composite high schools, staffed as they are with competent administrators and well qualified teachers, the principals should be delegated the authority, through the local school board's administrative and supervisory staff, to alter courses of study in order to meet the needs of a specific group of pupils, to alter the allocation of credits in order to facilitate scheduling of classes, to use textbooks and reference books which are new or different from the authorized ones, or even to develop new courses of study on an experimental basis. Participation by teachers who are subject-matter specialists in this type of local curriculum development would lead to improvement of instructional practices in the classroom. It must always be borne in mind, however, that if the activities of any classroom are predetermined without incorporating the ideas of the teacher concerned, it matters little where the precasting is done; the net result is almost the same. It is also a possibility that significant contributions could be made to the over-all high school program if appropriate channels of communication were set up for transmitting ideas and information at the city, divisional, and provincial levels.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends that a detailed study be made of the ways and means by which an increased degree of local autonomy in curriculum matters can be granted through

elected school boards to administrators, supervisors, and classroom teachers with a view to the modification and adaptation of provincial curricula and services to local requirements.

This Local further recommends that a detailed study be made of other problems relating to composite high schools, such as:

1. the optimum size of the composite high school plant;
2. the curricular programs of the suggested multi-diploma scheme of organization;
3. the special services which are desirable and necessary in composite high schools;
4. the maximum utilization of existing physical facilities;
5. the administrative and supervisory problems inherent in this type of school organization;
6. the impact of composite high school education on student, teaching and administrative personnel;
7. the establishment of standards and norms by which the efficiency of the composite high school can be evaluated in the future.

APPENDIX A TO CHAPTER V

Section 1 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of English in the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

(a) The Teaching Load as an aspect of teaching efficiency in English

In appreciation of the fact that language as a creative and communicative art cannot be taught effectively without much individual help, and that the present class load makes individual help almost an impossibility, we recommend that the class load of Language 10, Language 20 and English 30 teachers be limited to twenty or twenty-five students. We further recommend that the above-mentioned teachers be required to teach not more than six classes per day.

The Senior High School Curriculum Guide for English page 8, paragraph 3, states "that at least every two weeks students submit a paragraph, theme, letter, or similar assignment for the teacher's approval."

At present the average class load carried by language teachers (Language 10, Language 20 and English 30) is thirty-three. The average number of classes taught by language teachers is three. Approximately one hundred language assignments should be marked every two weeks. The average marking time, approximately fifteen minutes each, means twenty-five hours of marking every two weeks, or two and one half hours per day for every school day per year. If these three classes were a teacher's total load, the teaching of language would present no problem, but in addition this teacher teaches four other classes for which some marking must be done. He also has lesson preparation, test preparation, and marking of tests for seven classes. No teacher has time or energy for such an enormous task. In making this request for a smaller class load, English teachers are not thinking primarily of themselves but of the pupils. There are many students needing individual help in language and getting only a very limited amount, because present conditions do not permit more.

We should like to point out that in the past few years the Edmonton Public School Board has reduced the class load and has given all high school teachers a preparation period per day. However, the present class load of thirty to thirty-five students is still much too heavy for a teacher to give the best and most effective language instruction.

(b) Adequacy of Textbooks in English

The English 30 textbook, Thought and Expression, is highly satisfactory. However, we feel that the departmental examination should parallel more closely the syllabus. English 30 students are required to study a Shakespearian play which takes a month to six weeks. It is only fair that there be a compulsory question on this aspect of the course.

The Literature 20 text, Creative Living, is quite satisfactory for the average student.

The Literature 10 text, Creative Living, is also satisfactory for the average student, but the textbook alone does not give sufficient variety. We recommend the introduction of the study of a full length play, or even better, the study of a novel. The study of either of these would lend variety, but the study of the latter (the novel) would afford an excellent basis for the pursuit of leisure reading.

The series of texts, English for Today, for Language 10 and 20 we find inadequate for the following reasons: they are repetitious in themselves, there is a lack of practical exercises dealing with the fundamentals, there is an inclusion of impractical material, and there is erroneous material. (Specific examples were submitted to support these well-founded criticisms.)

Regarding the Language 10 and 20 textbooks, we recommend:

- i. That English for Today 10 and 20 be rejected at once.
- ii. That comprehensive and practical textbooks be introduced. (By this we mean textbooks that include more exact material, examples, and exercises. The new textbooks, ~~one for each~~ grade, must contain all the material necessary for the teaching of language in high school.)
- iii. That before new textbooks are prescribed for use, they be tried and evaluated over a period of time by a large number of experienced and qualified teachers. (The present textbooks for Language 10 and 20 were assigned, without any trial. This practice is unwise.)
- iv. That better courses of study be planned with more exact material, examples, and exercises. (It should be made plain in each course outline exactly what level of achievement should be expected and what subject material should be mastered.)

(c) Remedial English in Grade X

The teachers of English feel that, because C and D students from grade IX find it difficult to handle Language 10, a remedial course is necessary for these students. A course, Language 12, should replace the present Language 10 course for C and D students only. Therefore, they have passed the following motion:

"INASMUCH AS C and D students from grade IX show a lack of competence in language, and since approximately twenty-five per cent of the students entering grade X are C and D students, it is impractical to admit them to the grade X language course as it is now constituted;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a remedial course, to be called Language 12, be introduced in place of Language 10 to meet the needs of C and D students."

The recommended regulations for the course are as follows:

- i. All C and D students from grade IX must take Language 12 (five credits) in place of Language 10; all other students must take Language 10.
- ii. Language 12 should include the following material:
 - a) The sentence
 - b) The paragraph
 - c) The letter - friendly and business
 - d) Fundamentals: sentence parts, sentence errors, case, agreement, tense, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, diction, usage, reading, vocabulary writing, oral work.
- iii. As a follow-up to Language 12, H and A students from Language 12 proceed to Language 20; B and C students from Language 12 proceed to Language 10.

(d) The Pass Mark in English

We recommend that the pass mark in Language 10 and 20, Literature 10 and 20, and English 30 be a "B" and not a "C". We submit the following reasons:

- i. Since the percentage grading given to a student should be representative of the amount of knowledge acquired and the degree of skill attained by him in a course, it seems entirely unreasonable that a grading of less than "B" should constitute a pass mark.

- ii. The "C" pass-standard lowers the prestige of the courses in English.
- iii. Since the importance of subjects in English is a recognized fact, it is evident that the standard set for these subjects should be kept in line with the standard of other high school units.
- iv. At present, students with gradings lower than B standing in other subjects are required to return for a fourth year of high school. (In some schools these students make up 5% of the grade XII class.) On the other hand, many students making a mark of lower than B standing in English 30 are allowed to graduate.

We further recommend that the whole system of scaling marks be studied with a view to insuring the adequacy of departmental examinations as instruments of evaluation in determining the student's fitness for promotion.

(e) In Service Training

We recommend that, with the advent of the large composite high school and the consequent specialization of teachers, attention be given to in-service training through more direct help extended to the new teacher during the first year of work.

We further suggest that this assistance could take the form of: a specified weekly question-answer period involving at least one experienced teacher as well as the inexperienced teachers (to handle individual problems of orientation, subject matter and methods); observation periods in classrooms of experienced teachers; and regular meetings of teachers of the English department concerning course content and unit planning, methods, and research.

(f) Aids to Teaching in English Language and English Literature

- i. As an aid to the teaching of both Language and Literature courses in the Senior High Schools, more and a greater variety of films and film strips should be made available to teachers via the Audio-Visual Aids Branch of the Department of Education.
- ii. In order to carry out properly a programme of leisure reading it is essential that the Senior High Schools have a central library, a good book stock, and a trained teacher-librarian. The library must have an adequate stock of classified and catalogued books. In the past, book grants have not been sufficient to provide a variety of leisure reading books. A specific grant from the Department of Education for the purchase of books is required if we are to have a successful reading program.
- iii. In the interests of the students, the librarian and library should be available at all times for reference and help. Presently most libraries in Edmonton Public High Schools are used as study halls.

Section 2 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of Social Studies
in the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the
Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

(a) Reorganization of Social Studies Curriculum

(1) The Social Studies curriculum should be reorganized because:

- a) The unit method is unsatisfactory.
- b) There is a lack of opportunity for intensive study.
- c) There is an excessive amount of repetition.
- d) There is a lack of orderly development.
- e) Faulty research methods are encouraged.
- f) Scholarly texts and scholarship are generally ignored.

(2) Proposals for the New Curriculum

- a) Reduce the broad scope in particular years
- b) Avoid repetitive skimming
- c) Increase the depth of study in a narrower subject field.
- d) By adherence to a,b and c above achieve a better understanding of this field of social science than is possible under present methods.
- e) Encourage student inquiry for more precise information and deeper understanding.

(3) Recommendations

- a) That a wide selection of scholarly textbooks be made freely available to the students in social studies.
- b) Since the time available (175 minutes per week) does not permit any substantial study of the humanities (history, geography, civics, sociology, economics), we recommend an increase of 60% in time allotted to Social Studies in the High School.
- c) We recommend that the Curriculum include an additional 5 credit course for the study of world geography in grade X, and an additional 3 credit value for social studies in each of grades XI and XII; the additional time in XI and XII to be utilized in directed reading to develop background knowledge and to increase the depth of study.

(b) The Passing Mark in Social Studies

The pass mark in any subject may be placed, one would suppose, at almost any point on a per cent scale. If the pass mark is low, the examiner's concept of the relation between what a student knows and what he ought to know ideally, or at any rate the proportion of what he can reproduce on an examination as compared with what he has been taught, is low. On the other hand,

if the pass mark is high, the examiner's expectations about the amount of examination material the pupils will answer correctly is high. An arbitrary 50% level is chosen frequently. Perhaps that level should be higher. One could argue that surely a student should know more than half of what he has been taught in any given period of time in order to pass. Even more would one be justified in balking at a 40% requirement now established as the passing mark in social studies.

But perhaps the marks have been treated as raw scores and "normalized". If such is the case, one then becomes concerned not with an arbitrary subject matter requirement for passing, but with an arbitrary decision about how many students (or what per cent of the total group being examined) shall pass. Seldom, however, if ever, is this latter procedure applied in grade X or XI social studies.

A real cause for complaint in the social studies field is that the pass mark of 40%, whatever it may mean, is different from that required in other subjects. Surely the importance of mastery of subject matter is no less here than in science or mathematics. We urge that this discrepancy be removed by an upward adjustment of the mark required for passing social studies in the high school.

It is also requested that the Department of Education raise slightly the standard required for a pass on the grade IX examinations in social studies.

(c) Double-Track System in Social Studies

Since social studies is a compulsory course in the Senior High Schools, students of I.Q.'s ranging between 80 and 115 must take the same course. Obviously, justice cannot be rendered to either: the students of lesser ability cannot absorb the course and thereby do not derive any profit from it; while the able students are not sufficiently challenged, do not get the maximum benefit from their school training, become bored and frequently adopt unsound study habits and attitudes. It is therefore suggested that a two-stream system of social studies be introduced into the composite high school: one stream (Social Studies 10, 20, 30) leading to matriculation with a departmental examination at grade XII; the other stream (Social Studies 11, 21, 31) leading to a High School Diploma without departmental examination.

The senior course will be the present social studies high school course on a reorganized basis. It is suggested that the passing mark of the senior course is to be raised to a "B". Students who make a mark of "C" will be forced to repeat the course if they wish to be promoted, while students who achieve

a standing of "D" will be dropped into the junior course (i.e., a "D" in Social Studies 10 means demotion to Social Studies 11 the following year). This will exclude loafers from the senior courses altogether.

Only students who leave junior high school with at least a "B" standing in social studies will be permitted to take the senior course. We feel that this procedure will lead to greater efforts in the junior high school. It is suggested, however, that students who make an "H" in Social Studies 11 may be permitted to take Social Studies 20 in the following year at the discretion of the principal. After the first year in senior high school changing from the junior to the senior course will be impossible, while downgrading from the senior to the junior pattern will be an effective deterrent throughout all three grades of senior high school.

We do not propose to introduce a watered-down social studies course into the composite high schools; what we are aiming at is to reach those students of lesser ability who are not profiting from the present set-up. Even a "C" pass does not, in our opinion, indicate that the course has been properly comprehended. We are only deluding ourselves if we believe that the borderline cases are deriving any benefit from the present procedure. We feel that the new approach would be of far more value to the students of lesser ability. The junior course ought to provide the students with a thorough background of geography, civics, Canadian history, current events and those aspects of human history which are of great importance in the development of our civilization (pre-history, Greek democracy, Christianity and other religions, feudalism and the Industrial Revolution). The passing mark of the junior course would also be a "B" for all three grades.

Once the students of lesser ability or less desire to study are segregated, it will be possible to cover the material of the senior course in a more thorough and challenging fashion and to put greater demands on the students. This will result in a raising of standards. On the other hand, it will enable many weaker students to go through grades X to XII without the continuous mental strain of being in danger of failing.

We do not think that the majority of senior high school students ought to be in the junior course. We assume that in grade X perhaps less than 25% of the entrants will take Social Studies 11. Many drop-outs from school in grades XI and XII will, in our opinion, be prevented if failing students have the junior course as an alternative. We are concerned about present discussions in the newspapers about plans to separate the best students from the rest; we feel that the weaker students ought to be segregated. Schools should be left to decide at their

own discretion as to the suitability of each grade XII student to take the departmental examination or to take the Social Studies 31 examination set by his own school.

We realize that there will be opposition in many quarters to a double-track system. There are the arguments that "the child will be hurt", if he is placed into a junior course. We feel, however, that he is placed into the junior course because his achievement does not warrant his going into a course of studies which he will fail, and where he also will be a drag on the brighter students. Furthermore, school is a preparation for life, and young men and women at the beginning of their career should know what their abilities are in order to adjust themselves to the world. Nor can the system be called undemocratic, because it is a fact that not all people have the same ability. We as teachers wish to enable every student to acquire as much knowledge and inspiration as his ability permits him. We feel that the less able students who continuously fail will leave high school with a sense of failure and frustration, and with an unsound attitude towards learning. We consider this an unwise spending of the taxpayers' money.

Some people claim that the present senior high school set up of the social studies is sufficiently flexible to satisfy all students. We do not think so. In classes where ability varies so much, a teacher is forced to the middle road or even lower in order to reach the lowest common denominator; otherwise the percentage of failure becomes alarming. The double-track system will permit greater flexibility. We also note that the public was not opposed to the setting up of two streams in mathematics (although that subject is not even compulsory) - why should there be an insurmountable opposition to social studies doing the same?

We suggest that it is up to the administration of every school to decide in cooperation with the staff as to which teachers shall teach the junior and senior courses. There is no reason why the average social studies teacher ought not to handle both. We know from experience that the less able students are the greater challenge to the skill of the teacher. We do feel, however, that the social studies teachers handling the senior classes should have a good background in history and related subjects.

(d) Class Load

The teachers of social studies in the City of Edmonton Public High Schools have resolved, "that the optimum number of pupils per class is twenty-five, and that no class should exceed thirty in number."

(1) Definition

- a) Optimum number is that number of pupils in the class which the teacher can teach most efficiently from the point of view of the child's development.
- b) A class, in this case, is a class wherein any one of the social studies is taught at the high school level. It may be a class in Ancient and Medieval History, Modern History, or History of the World Since 1914. It may include one of the social studies electives.

(2) Reasons for Present Concern

- a) In over 90% of the classes in social studies in Edmonton, the number of pupils exceeds thirty.
- b) Increased population will make the situation critical in the near future.
- c) No one will deny the inescapable relationship between teacher load and goals of education.
- d) There is no written policy concerning class size.
- e) If there is no written policy, in certain cases, the limit will be determined only by the physical capacity of the room.

(3) Evidence

- a) Because there are more than twenty-five pupils in most classes of social studies in Edmonton, the social and emotional health of pupils and teachers suffer.
- b) Because classes are overloaded, there is little time for individual attention; this is not good for education.
- c) Because classes are overloaded, some teachers are forced to return to the lecture method of teaching. They cannot get to know their students; they cannot teach the "intangibles"; they must teach to the test.
- d) Saddling teachers with more than thirty pupils per class must contribute to the teacher shortage.

(4) Conclusions

- a) The optimum number of pupils per class in the social studies is twenty-five and no class should exceed thirty in number.
- b) This should be a written policy.
- c) Classes should be twenty-five in number so that the teacher will be able to give individual instruction, concern herself with child development, devote some leisure time to self-improvement, and keep in touch with all parents. Also the teacher will not become discouraged and leave the profession.
- d) Class size is indicative of the kind of learning experience the child will have.

(e) Increased Library Grants for Classrooms and Maximum Use of Central Library Facilities

The present school grant structure made by the Department of Education to individual school boards does not include a specific sum earmarked for the purchase of library and general reference books. Individual school boards vary widely on the size of the grant for the purchase of school books. Lethbridge Senior High Schools are allotted one dollar and fifty cents per pupil per year by the Lethbridge Public School Board. Medicine Hat High Schools receive a grant of fifty dollars per classroom per year. Calgary High Schools under the Public School Board receive a grant of one dollar per pupil per year that is to go toward the purchase of schoolbooks.

Clearly the amount of annual classroom grant or per pupil grant, at least in the cities of the province, is insufficient to meet the demands of the present social studies curricula. The grade X course alone asks for the use of reference books that more than use up the annual grant allotted by the public school boards of Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge or Medicine Hat.

In cases where a new Social Studies room is being opened in the senior high school, a grant of at least \$300.00 should be made in order to provide an adequate basic classroom library.

The Senior High School teachers of Social Studies make the following recommendations:

- 1) That the Department of Education when making annual grants to school boards in Alberta earmark approximately \$3.00 per student per year for the purpose of purchasing library books.
- 2) That the Department of Education, together with the school board concerned, set aside approximately \$300.00 to establish properly adequate library facilities in each new social studies classroom.
- 3) That present monies available from both provincial and municipal authorities for the purchase of school library books is totally inadequate and that these grants should at least be double in order to meet the increasing pressure placed on social studies reference material by rapidly expanding high school student body.
- 4) Central School Libraries: Central library facilities are not an innovation in Canada, although Alberta has lagged in developing the central library program. Too frequently central libraries have been used as study halls in this province, a practice permitted by school superintendents and school boards, which impairs the purpose of a central library in a Senior High School. This brief submits that the use of central libraries staffed by trained librarians who also hold a teacher's certificate in this province should

continue to be an integral part of the senior high school scene. By substantially raising the grant for the purpose of purchasing books in Alberta senior high schools, it will be possible to maintain adequate collections of library books. If the grant is not raised substantially, the increasing demands of an expanding senior high school student population will make it impossible to maintain present services in this field.

- 1) A separate course in Geometry as is provided in the senior year of the extrajunior pattern, to include the area presently covered in Mathematics 10 and Mathematics 21.
- 2) A re-allocation and extension of studies in the Mathematics 10, 20, 30 sequence to provide better coverage of algebra, a preparation for the study of calculus, and inclusion of some treatment of financial mathematics (financial mathematics is included in the grade XII unit, but is not on the syllabus.).
- 3) A closer correlation between the problems in mathematics and the problems of physics and chemistry.
- 4) The placing of the Mathematics II (trigonometry) course on a par with the Mathematics 30 course so that universities would accept one or the other in their entrance requirements.
- 5) Restricted entrance into the mathematics courses leading to University entrance, so that standards may be raised.
- 6) The provision of courses in mathematics for the non-matriculating, yet not incompetent, student. The present Mathematics 11, 12, and 21 courses were designed for this, but in practice they have degenerated into remedial mathematics.

(b) Towards raising the standards of instruction, there are three recommendations:

- 1) Entrance requirements for the Faculty of Education and B.Ed. degree should be revised upward.
- 2) More emphasis on student courses and less on methods in the Faculty of Education.
- 3) Reducing the teacher-pupil ratio from the present 35-40 to a maximum of 25.

Section 3 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of Mathematics
in the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in
the Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

(a) The whole field of High School Mathematics should be reviewed and revised. Recommendations are:

- 1) A separate course in Geometry to be provided in the second year of the matriculation pattern, to include the area presently covered in Mathematics 10 and Mathematics 20.
- 2) A re-allocation and extension of topics in the Mathematics 10, 20, 30 sequence to provide better coverage of algebra, a preparation for the study of calculus, and inclusion of some treatment of financial mathematics (Financial mathematics is included in the grade XII text, but it is not on the syllabus.).
- 3) A closer correlation between the problems in mathematics and the problems of physics and chemistry.
- 4) The placing of the Mathematics 31 (trigonometry) course on a par with the Mathematics 30 course so that universities would accept one or the other in their entrance requirements.
- 5) Restricted entrance into the mathematics courses leading to University entrance, so that standards may be raised.
- 6) The provision of courses in mathematics for the non-matriculating, yet not incompetent, student. The present Mathematics 11, 12, and 21 courses were designed for this, but in practice they have degenerated into remedial mathematics.

(b) Towards raising the standards of instruction, there are these recommendations:

- 1) Entrance requirements for the Faculty of Education and B.Ed. degree should be revised upward.
- 2) More emphasis on content courses and less on methods in the Faculty of Education.
- 3) Reducing the teacher-pupil ratio from the present 35-40 to a maximum of 25.

Section 4 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of Science
in the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the
Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

The Science Coordinators of the Edmonton Public High Schools
submit this one recommendation:

"A thorough, complete and immediate study of the desirability
and feasibility of the installation of a Two-Track System in the
Provincial High School Science Program."

Memoranda:

In its present state, the science curriculum, especially at
the grades X and XI levels, is designed to provide adequate science
instruction for the student of only average ability. The rapid
learner is subjected to the same mediocre course and finds no
challenge, little incentive and inspiration to continue in pre-
paration for a science career. With the introduction of a two-track
science program in conjunction with a similar program in mathematics,
courses could be offered to meet the varying needs of all science
students. Thus, the non-matriculation students could take and com-
plete general courses in the subject while the matriculation students
would be given the science-centered track preparing them for entrance
to Universities.

In particular, the science-centered track of the proposed system
would provide the following advantages:

- (a) There would be at least two years of chemistry and two years of
physics in the high school program.
- (b) There would be an opportunity for more experimental work in both
grades XI and XII. (At present, there is absolutely no provision
for experiments by students in grade XI science and there is not
enough school time allotted for experiments in the grade XII
courses.)
- (c) More emphasis would be placed on learning scientific principles
and the techniques involved in applying these principles, both
qualitatively and quantitatively. (In the present grades X and
XI science courses, the student is required to learn a mass of
descriptive facts, with no emphasis on understanding and applying
the principles explaining this information.)

Section 5 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of Latin in
the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the
Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

Since Latin will never be dead while English lives, the study of Latin assists materially in the mastery of English, in grammar, in vocabulary and in sentence and paragraph construction. This study is also most educational in that it develops greatly both reasoning power and memorization ability.

In order that the standards of high school leaving in Alberta should equal those of other provinces, foreign language courses should be offered for at least three years. The present course in Latin has two faults:

- i) Not enough material in toto as it is only a two-year course .
- ii) Too much material prescribed for the second year. Top speed is necessary to cover the required work in the textbooks, and teachers find that there is no time to give background material in the form of history and films, or to give sight translation in class, nor even to give adequate tests during the second year.

There is no doubt that the requirements of the French 30 course are much less demanding than those of the Latin 30 course . Therefore students tend to choose French 30 in preference to Latin 30 in their final year, thus losing the beneficial training of a second year in Latin.

The textbook, "Latin for Secondary Schools", is good, but the text "Second Latin Reader" should be replaced by readings which are graded and are more suited to second year reading ability.

Section 6 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of French in
the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the
Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

Resolution passed unanimously at the meeting of French teachers
of the Edmonton and District Convention, February 4, 1958, at Victoria
Composite High School:

"That the curriculum committee be requested to extend the
compulsory matriculation course in foreign languages to three years."

Memoranda:

- (a) Alberta students entering university out of the province find difficulty in meeting entrance requirements in foreign languages.
- (b) It is felt that in two years students do not reach a level of competence adequate to proceed with university courses in a foreign language.
- (c) Present grade eleven students do not have the acquaintance with verb forms and tenses required of French one students under the previous program.
- (d) Recognition of verb forms and tenses is felt to provide a better opportunity for wider reading and translation, i.e. for use of the language, than vocabulary lists.
- (e) It is not felt that the present Oral French courses, French 11 and French 21 should be sacrificed for a stronger emphasis on academic French; rather that they be considered "exploratory" subjects for the non-matriculation student.
- (f) French 31 might still be considered as an additional year of French for the matriculation student proceeding to university for an Arts course in languages, or for the non-matriculation student with interest and ability in the subject.
- (g) The re-introduction of suitable reading texts at all levels of the French program is desirable from the point of view of use of the language.
- (h) Since French is a second official language in Canada, it is desirable that at least our superior students have some facility in speaking and reading the language of their fellow-countrymen.
- (i) That a monthly magazine sponsored by the Department of Education, might form useful supplementary reading material for all students of French in the province.
- (j) That only students entering high school with academic standings indicating probable success in matriculation be allowed to enrol in academic courses in French.
- (k) That there be provision for students with above average success in High School Oral French courses to transfer to the academic courses: i.e., French 11 to French 20 or French 21 to French 30.

Section 7 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of Commercial Subjects in the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

In this relatively new and expanding field of education within our school system, great steps have been made in providing better qualified people for our business world. As an aid for further progress, we would like to submit the following:

- (a) In view of the large number of students registered in the Commercial program, and the large number of teachers involved, it is recommended that the Department of Education appoint a Provincial Supervisor.
- (b) In order to help alleviate the shortage of qualified commercial teachers, it is recommended that the University introduce more business courses at the undergraduate level and establish other business courses at the graduate level. Appropriate visiting lecturers should be obtained for the summer sessions.
- (c) It is recommended that the Faculty of Education accept at least Bookkeeping 30, Secretarial Training 30, and Typewriting 30 as entrance requirements electives for students registering in the Commercial B.Ed. program.
- (d) It is also recommended that Bookkeeping 30 be accepted as one of the elective subjects in the academic program for those students registering in the Faculty of Commerce.
- (e) Classes of 40 or more students are untenable and it is recommended that the size of classes be reduced (to a maximum of 30 students.)
- (f) The co-operation extended by the Department of Education in permitting teachers and schools to develop and enlarge courses on their own initiative is appreciated.

Section 8 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of Home Economics in the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the Brief to the Royal Commission on Education

- (a) Home Economics is a universally recognized scientific field embracing the science of nutrition and of textiles. It should, therefore, be accepted as an elective science in the senior high school program. This procedure is followed by the British Columbia Department of Education.
- (b) Specifically, the senior Home Economics courses, Foods and Nutrition 30 and Fabrics and Dress 30, each requiring three years of study in the field of Home Economics, should be given matriculation status, and provided with departmental examinations. When these courses are taken in the general high school program, no departmental examination should be required.
- (c) Any one Home Economics course should be accepted as fulfilling the science requirement of the general program.
- (d) No student in the senior high school should be deprived of the privilege of electing courses in Home Economics.

Implementation of the foregoing recommendations would provide for the varying needs of a large number in the general program, would permit students of high ability to take advanced courses in fields of special interest and aptitude, and would increase the number of those wishing to proceed to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Household Economics, as well as to the degree of Bachelor of Education.

- (e) A Graduate School of Household Economics at the University of Alberta would provide for those desiring an advanced degree in this field.

The recognized status that technology has acquired in the fields of business and industry should be recognized by our educational authorities also.

The students who are interested solely in a post high school technical vocation should be placed into a pattern of pre-vocational training. These patterns would be of a much more practical nature than they are today, in that they will be geared to the apprenticeship trades. Increased practical shop time is advocated for students in this pattern and related subjects such as Technical Mathematics,

Section 9 Recommendations Submitted by the Teachers of Technical Electives in the Edmonton Public High Schools for Inclusion in the Brief to the Royal Commission on Education.

The teachers of the Edmonton Public High School technical electives are of the firm belief that the high school technical program is in need of revision. The role of the high school, at present, seems to point to the concept that matriculation is the only goal worth pursuing for our students. Admittedly, the concept of matriculation endeavor is to provide capable students with a liberal education which will assist them in furthering their education to a level of professional status. This is a commendable goal for those students who possess the inclination and the ability. However, a comparatively large proportion of the high school population have no intention of proceeding with a university preparation program. This large majority of the student body should be interested in undertaking a pre-vocational program which will lead to an apprenticeship in some particular occupation. At present, the numerous electives that are offered on the high school curriculum are considered by many to be a hodge-podge of little educational value. To be realistic we must recognize that there can be no single aim or concept of what a high school's function should be. Grouping must take place, not only in accordance with recognizable subject matter patterns, but should be designed to prepare the student for definite vocational areas of society.

Subject matter, such as Automotives, Drafting, Electricity, Metals and Woodwork, could be reconstructed in such a manner that these can be placed on the same level of achievement as matriculation subjects, such as the present Mathematics and Sciences. These above-mentioned applied science electives could render themselves satisfactorily to a larger and more advanced science curriculum. Students selecting one or two technical electives such as Mechanical Science, Drafting, Electrical Science, Building Technology and the Science of Metals would find the subject matter beneficial to them when attempting post high school training in a university engineering faculty or technical institute.

The recognized esteem that technology has acquired in the fields of business and industry should be recognized by our educational authorities also.

The students who are interested solely in a post high school technical vocation should be guided into a pattern of pre-vocational training. These patterns would be of a much more practical nature than they are today, in that they will be geared to the apprenticeship trades. Increased practical shop time is advocated for students in this pattern and related subjects such as Technical Mathematics,

English, etc. would be an included portion of the curriculum. On successful completion of this pre-vocational training, a recognizable diploma could be given to the graduands and the presentation of this diploma would automatically lessen the time spent on their vocational apprenticeship training.

If the proposals mentioned above are given careful consideration, students may achieve satisfactory guidance and training that will be meaningful and purposeful.

Recommendations:

- (a) That Technical Electives, such as Automotives, Drafting, Electricity, Metals and Woodwork be given matriculation status for students who wish to attend a university engineering faculty or technical institutions.
- (b) That a pre-vocational training program be instituted for those students who are interested in the apprenticeship trades. On completion of their pre-vocational training these students will be given a recognized High School Technical Diploma.
- (c) That an exploratory technical elective program be designed which will meet the needs of those students who wish to acquire a general High School Diploma.
- (d) That the present four year program in Industrial Arts leading to the Bachelor of Education degree be revised in such a way that graduands may be qualified to attend the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Alberta. In the field of graduate studies, a variety of avenues should be planned, in conjunction with the Faculties of Science and Engineering, which would lead to a Master's Degree in Industrial Education.

CHAPTER VI

THE EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAM

Teachers are probably more aware than are any others, of the benefits accruing to adolescent boys and girls from an adequate program of extracurricular activities. The very fact that there is such a large number of activities being carried on in today's high schools, under the direct sponsorship and control of teachers, is proof of the interest and enthusiasm professional people have for such a program.

Throughout Alberta and to a very high degree in the cities, there has been in the past few years a rapid increase in the student population in the secondary schools, with a resultant growth in the size of the schools, rather than in an increase in the number of schools. The care and planning that has gone into the building of new schools has not had any counterpart in planning to prevent the steadily increasing loads of out-of-class responsibilities that have fallen upon the shoulders of the teachers in the new, large schools.

As the student population of a school increases, there occurs a disproportionate increase in the number, variety, and complexity of the student activities that must be undertaken, and of the supervision that becomes necessary.

A larger school obviously indicates larger school boundaries. These mean greater travelling distances for students, which in turn mean more students arrive at school at an early hour, and more students carry lunches. As a result, a large composite

high school is forced to provide accommodation for students before classes begin at nine o'clock, must provide cafeterias and lunch rooms, and must provide suitable recreational facilities during the noon hour.

All of the above require additional supervision by teachers, during out-of-class hours. They also demand adequate organization and co-ordination, and in the case of athletic and club activities, they demand skill and competence on the part of the teacher sponsor. Thus, there has grown up in the new composite high schools a total burden of non-teaching activities of a clerical, supervisory, sponsoring, advising, and coaching nature, which affected relatively few in the past, but which today involves almost every teacher on the staff.

A study was made by a committee of Edmonton teachers of the total out-of-class loads of curricular, clerical, supervisory, professional, and extracurricular responsibilities being carried by the teachers in the Edmonton Public high schools. The study began in September, 1956, and has just been completed (March 1958). It covered the teachers' activities for the school year 1956-57, and a re-check in the year 1957-58 school year. A copy of the report of the committee is submitted with this brief.

The study showed that for the year 1956-57, Edmonton Public high school teachers, each spent an average of 749.6 hours a year in out-of-class activities directly related to their teaching. If the school year is considered to be 200 days, the high school teachers spent an average of about 3.75 hours a day on such

activities. One table in the report (Table V) indicates that the average number of out-of-class hours per public high school teacher per year spent on preparation, marking, clerical, professional, and extracurricular activities, was as follows:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Yearly Out-of-Class Hours</u>
Preparation of subjects and lessons	199.0
Preparation of tests and exams	39.1
Marking of assignments	152.9
Marking of tests and exams	152.8
Clerical tasks	40.7
Scheduled supervision	33.8
Professional and committee meetings	33.7
Extracurricular duties	<u>97.7</u>
Total	749.6

Another table (Table VI) indicates that the average number of hours per week worked by teachers who taught a full day in one of the given subject areas in the Edmonton Public high schools, in doing those tasks listed above, for the year 1956-57 was:

<u>Subject Areas</u>	<u>Total Weekly Hours</u>
English, Social Studies	54.3
Mathematics, Sciences	49.3
Fine Arts; Art, Dramatics, Music	41.4
Foreign Languages	46.4
Industrial Arts, Home Economics	41.5

Physical Education	44.3
Business Education	45.4
Other Electives	<u>44.9</u>
Average for all teachers	47.7

The findings of the report reveal clearly that the working week of the Edmonton Public high school teachers is far in excess of the "nine-to-four, five day week". The same is undoubtedly true of teachers at other levels and in other school systems. For every five hours spent by the high school teachers in the classrooms, almost four hours more were spent outside of school hours in order that they might discharge effectively their professional responsibilities.

Teachers have long complained that there are too many interferences with their primary responsibility -- that of classroom teaching. This report would appear to substantiate this contention. It might also throw additional light on why the problem of the retention of teachers in the profession has proven so difficult of solution.

Using as background material the report of the Edmonton committee on, "A Survey of the Teacher Load in Curricular, Extra-curricular, and Professional Activities of the Edmonton Public High Schools for the Year 1956-57", the following recommendations are made. It is hoped that they will offer partial solutions to the problem of the heavy out-of-class loads being carried by teachers.

1. The public must be made aware of the total classroom and out-of-classroom contributions being made by teachers to the education of the children of this Province. This awareness must include an understanding of the total length of the average teacher's work-week, and the fact that it requires almost as much time out of the class as it does in the classroom itself, for teachers to provide the kind of educational program being offered in today's large schools.
2. Frequent attacks by uninformed laymen and by some sections of the press are severely damaging the morale and confidence of professional teachers, who know that they are already giving of their knowledge, patience, time and energy, far in excess of the amounts suggested in the statements of those who are attacking teaching. The volume and the quality of the voluntary, out-of-class contributions made by teachers to the education of our youth can be maintained only if the donors feel that they have the active sympathy and support of the public.
3. Interested groups outside of the schools frequently exert pressures to have more activities undertaken by the schools, or to make use of the organization, staff, and facilities of the schools to further certain special kinds of activities. These pressures must be resisted by community leaders and by educational authorities, so that the available out-of-class time and energy of teachers shall not become dissipated over an ever-expanding area of extracurricular activities, to the detriment of classroom instruction.

4. The Department of Education and School Boards must take greater cognizance of the contributions of teachers to the extracurricular life of school students. This appreciation should result in plans and provisions being made to relieve the more heavily-burdened teachers of some of their total loads. Relief can be provided in three areas:

(a) Relief can be provided from the load of preparation and marking through a reduction in class sizes, and in the number of classes a day the teacher is expected to meet.

(b) Relief can be provided from the clerical load through the provision of more secretarial help in school offices.

(c) Relief can be provided from the supervisory and extra-curricular load in two ways:

i. Paid supervisors can be employed in certain positions.

The supervision of cafeterias, study halls, and detention rooms might be done by paid supervisors. The coaching of athletic teams might be done by paid experts other than teachers.

ii. If supervision by teachers is necessary, such as noon-hour supervision of halls or extracurricular coaching, such work should be accepted in lieu of classroom duties. It is unreasonable to expect a full day of teaching, with all the attendant preparation and marking, and in addition to ask the teacher to supervise students during his noon hour.

5. If the Department of Education and School Boards consider out-of-class programs for students desirable and necessary, they should be prepared to assist in the formulation of policy statements to define:
- (a) The importance of the extracurricular program.
 - (b) The desirable types of school activities.
 - (c) Reasonable out-of-class loads that teachers might be expected to carry.
 - (d) Means to prevent the over-loading of conscientious teachers.
 - (e) Means of rewarding teachers for meritorious service in the less-publicized classroom situations, as well as in the better-known out-of-class activities areas.

The recruitment of teachers into the high schools and their retention in the profession depend in no small measure upon finding satisfactory solutions to the problems created by the heavy total loads that many teachers are expected to carry.

CHAPTER VII
JUNIOR COLLEGES

One of the major factors in our present educational crisis is the rapid increase in the population of Canada since 1945. In Alberta, overcrowding of our schools was already an acute problem during the 'thirties and during the war, and in that period very little building took place to relieve the situation. Since 1945 a tremendous expansion of our school facilities has taken place throughout the province. The expectation is that there can be very little slackening of the pace during the next ten or twenty years because the normal growth of our population, apart from further immigration, will require a further large expansion of our educational facilities.

Although only 7% of the students presently entering high school go on to the University, the natural growth in our population is reflected in an annual increase in attendance at the University, and it is expected that despite extensive building on the campus of the University, the facilities will be taxed to the limit within five years.

Speaking at a meeting of the first Edmonton District A.T.A. Convention in November, 1957, Dr. W. H. Swift, Deputy Minister of Education, said: "The University of Alberta in Edmonton already feels the pressure of numbers...As the population grows it will be very difficult to accommodate all students wishing to attend. The pressure will be relieved when junior colleges are established throughout the northern areas to provide preliminary studies. Alberta will see a period of development of junior colleges, but their pattern and location are yet to be chosen."

During the present (1958) session of the legislature in Alberta, it is expected that legislation to be known as "The Junior Colleges Act" will be introduced with a view to facilitating the establishment of such colleges and to provide for their proper administration under the aegis of the University.

In the past it has been the policy of the Government of Alberta that in the setting up of junior colleges, the initiative should come from the local school boards. In fact, the Alberta Education Act makes provision for the establishment of a junior college in any community upon request of a school board, or of a group of school boards, provided that the conditions are acceptable to the University authorities.

Up to the present, with one outstanding exception, those organizations most keenly interested in the establishment of junior colleges have been the religious denominations. One thinks of Mount Royal College in Calgary, a junior college of long standing, affiliated with the United Church of Canada; or of St. John's College in Edmonton, a Roman Catholic Seminary; and of the Lutheran College in Camrose, which is at present seeking affiliation with the University of Alberta.

The exception referred to above is the Lethbridge Junior College, established last year as a non-denominational junior college. At present housed in the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, the college is affiliated with the University of Alberta, and its curriculum covers courses in first year Arts and Science, pre-Medicine, pre-Dentistry, and pre-Law courses, and the first year of the two-year

course in Education, In addition to this, the college will be a centre for Adult Education, and will function as a community college as well as offering grade XII tutorial classes.

With the expectation that in the near future the University of Alberta will be forced to a measure of decentralization and that the first-year students will have to be accommodated in junior colleges, it is the opinion of the Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. that the problem of junior colleges is one of major importance to the future of higher education in this province. However, until the "Junior Colleges Act" becomes law, it will not be known what provisions the Government of Alberta intends to make for the setting up and operation of such colleges. It is believed, however, that those provisions of the Alberta Education Act which leave the initiative for the establishment of such colleges in the hands of the local school boards, will still be operative.

It is the opinion of the Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. that higher education in this Province is too important a function for its organization and control to be left entirely in the hands of local school boards, particularly when such boards may be influenced by sectarian religious denominations.

In the interests of a free, non-denominational and liberal education, we urge upon the Government of Alberta the need for an active policy of promoting the establishment of junior colleges in various centres of population in this Province so that when the need for decentralization becomes urgent, the University will have available for the carrying out of its first-year instruction institutions dedicated to freedom of thought and conscience.

For the implementation of such a policy, the following suggestions are offered:

1. That the general pattern established by the Lethbridge Junior Colleges be preferred in all future institutions of this kind;
2. That the junior college be thought of always as an upward extension of the secondary school system operated under the Department of Education, financed partly by contributions from the School Divisions in the area served by the junior college, but with due control exercised by the University of Alberta over all courses and all instruction leading to a University degree.
3. That the existing Agricultural Schools be adapted for use as junior colleges, to operate in conjunction with their present function as community and agricultural colleges.
4. That in addition to instruction in first-year University subjects, instruction be given at the grade XII level to deserving students who intend to enter the University; that these students be selected by examination at the grade XI level and be given scholarships to enable them to reside at the junior colleges and that they be given an advanced and enriched course in preparation for the University. It is submitted that such a policy would be in harmony with our present need for a higher standard of scholarship for our University matriculants, and that it would present opportunities for economy in the operate of grade XII classes in remote communities.
5. That if such colleges prove successful, similar institutions be established in Edmonton and Calgary so that deserving non-resident students in these areas may be brought together under an accelerated and enriched program in preparation for the University.

6. That the University of Alberta institute a cycle of advanced courses at the Summer Session which would lead to the degrees of M.A. and M.Sc. in the content fields so that high school teachers could equip themselves for teaching positions in these junior colleges by attendance at University Summer Sessions.

It is submitted that by the institution of such junior colleges, the first genuine effort to raise the standards of higher education will have been inaugurated. It follows that the University of Alberta in Edmonton and Calgary would be freed from the necessity of providing remedial instruction to matriculants, and would thus be able better to concentrate on the grade and post-graduate levels of instruction.

Further to No. 3 above, it is felt that the Agricultural Schools at Fairview, Olds and Vermilion afford a unique medium through which the Government might take the initiative in the junior college movement because:

1. each School serves an area comprising several School Divisions which could act as a unit under the terms of the Alberta Education Act;
2. good dormitory accommodation already exists;
3. as Agricultural Schools, their enrolments are dropping because of fundamental changes in the economy of rural Alberta;
4. excellent laboratory accommodation already exists for use in courses in the Faculties of Arts, Science and Agriculture;
5. the Schools enjoy a high measure of public esteem and confidence.

CHAPTER VIII

RETENTION IN SCHOOL

If our future citizens are properly to discharge their duties and responsibilities in the increasingly complex social and political organization which is concomitant with the rapid industrialization of this province, a higher level of general education must be required of Alberta youth. A combination of basic skills, fundamental knowledge and practical experience will no longer suffice. That formal schooling must extend over a period of from ten to twelve years is no longer a moot point. Compulsory school attendance has long been firmly supported by public opinion in this province, and the extension of the length of the compulsory period of schooling is worthy of serious consideration. Dropping out of school at any stage in the school system is bound to endanger the future welfare of both the individual and the society.

That it is most desirable for as many of our young people as possible to secure much more than the minimum of formal education is axiomatic. Graduation from a senior high school has come to be regarded as one of the democratic rights and privileges of all Alberta youth. Personnel managers give preference to applicants with high school education and usually urge students to stay on in school. University matriculation is considered to be the most desirable goal for all adolescents regardless of their capability of attaining this high level of academic education. It is presumed, erroneously, that most matriculants will proceed to further formal education at the university level.

The present drop-out rate from Alberta schools can only be inferred from random sources of statistics because a detailed study of all the aspects of this complex problem has never been made with reference to all schools in this province. The 1951 Canadian census indicated that approximately 50% of the 15-19 age group in Alberta was attending school. But this figure could very well be misleading. Fairly accurate estimates based on available statistics would seem to indicate that in any normal group of beginners, 65% will reach grade IX, 50% will enter a senior high school, 20% will receive a high school diploma, 7% will obtain a clear matriculation standing, 3% will enter the university, and 2% will receive a degree from the University of Alberta.

There is no simple direct answer to the question of why so many of our young people leave school without acquiring the maximum amount of formal education. The payment of family allowances on behalf of children under 16 years of age, conditional upon attendance at school, has resulted in attendance for a longer period. But on the other hand, the steadily rising cost of a high standard of living and the excessive burden of ever increasing income and other taxes has tended to reduce the number of years during which some young people may remain financially dependent and partake of education at higher levels.

The causes of school drop-outs may be classified arbitrarily into three groups: (1) personal reasons such as the family's attitude of indifference toward education beyond the compulsory level; (2) economic reasons such as the temptation offered by a

deceptively high level of wages; and (3) reasons related to the school such as boredom, repetition of prescribed subjects which they cannot master, and open conflict with the school environment. Although all these factors are usually closely interrelated, those having reference to the school seem to contribute more to dropping-out than do the other factors.

It is to be expected that there will always be a substantial rate of drop-outs among those young people of limited mental capacity who drift along in school with considerable failure and retardation, and those neurotic juvenile delinquents who have severe personality disorders. The former group should be given every possible assistance in special courses designed in terms of their limited abilities and future needs. The latter group, who have neither the emotional stability nor the inclination to complete programs suited to their abilities, would be better off in training institutions other than the public school. These "misfits" take up a disproportionate time of administrators and counsellors, and they interfere with the efficiency of instruction in the classroom.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. is gravely concerned over those students of superior or normal ability, whose achievement is far below the level of their ability. We are of the opinion that the most serious of all "wastages" in the schools is to be found among the superior students. Some of them fail to elect courses which are a challenge to them; others are enrolled in prescribed courses which do not extend them sufficiently enough to

give them that satisfaction of achievement which is so essential to their maximum self-realization. This situation must be remedied as expeditiously as possible.

Experienced as student counsellors would seem to indicate that most drop-outs among average and above-average students are due to lack of interest, frustration, and failure to achieve an acceptable standard in the subjects being studied. Only rarely does such a student leave school while he is making good marks in most of his subjects.

Much has been written in educational literature about making school subjects more interesting and easier for the average student. We frankly declare, at this point, our conviction that mastery of subject-matter is the best present measure of effort in relation to capacity and the most promising source of satisfaction in achievement. Interest comes most readily from success in a subject, and in turn, success depends equally upon the right choice of subjects and upon adequate background preparation in the subject area. We are not unduly concerned that a portion of school tasks should be hard and unpalatable, because much of life is equally so. It is, in our opinion, the individual's failure to master the subject-matter that is the real cause of most drop-outs among the normal and superior groups of students.

There is an urgent need in today's schools for an adequate screening process between the segments of the educational system for channelling pupils into courses in which they are likely to be successful. We cannot depend upon the free choice of the students -

often made without parental consultation - to give the best educational guidance. One does not go to a doctor for medical advice and then have the doctor offer the patient his choice of medications. Only adequately-trained and experienced teacher-counsellors can give the pupils and their parents sound advice as to what programs and courses are likely to meet with success in the case of a specific individual. With this duty to advise must go the authority to refuse to assist a student to enter a pattern of education or a course of studies in which all indications point to failure. We cannot accept the current idea that students have the democratic right to fail in any subject if they so desire.

Frustration and failure, and the consequent dropping-out, of students taking subjects for which they are inadequately equipped and for which they have little or no inclination, also results in disappointment and frustration for teachers. This, we believe, is one of the most potent factors in the failure of the profession to retain many of its well-qualified members. Teachers must feel happy and successful in their teaching if they are to make it their life work. They will feel so only if, among other things, they know that they are teaching students who are anxious and willing to learn, who are properly prepared to assimilate the subject-matter, and who are capable of being successful in their studies.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends:

- (1) that diversified programs be provided which, by their availability to pupils, by the quality of instruction and supervision, by the variety of courses suited to the varied aptitudes of the

pupils, by the adequacy of the accommodation and equipment, and by the atmosphere of freedom under wise authority, will be conducive to retaining an ever-increasing proportion of our young people in school;

- (2) That the Department of Education put some "teeth" into regulations such as are found in the Senior High School Handbook 1957-58, page 16, item 1(d) - "Student's choice of program is subject to the approval of the principal." - in such a way that the school administration will have specific authority to refuse permission to unsuitable students seeking admission to a type of program or course of studies in which they are bound to fail;
- (3) That more comprehensive achievement examinations and reliable diagnostic tests be introduced at the transition points between the segments of the educational system, such devices being designed to:
 - (a) classify students in such ways as to indicate not only passes and failures, but also those who are likely to succeed in any given pattern or program, as well as those who are likely to fail;
 - (b) challenge all students to do their best - comprehensive examinations are legitimate hurdles which adequately-prepared students can expect to surmount;
 - (c) set self-satisfying and immediate goals for the student to attain;
 - (d) set acceptable standards for the guidance of inexperienced teachers;

- (e) stimulate students to develop sound study habits;
 - (f) greatly reduce drop-outs which are due to factors which are related to the school;
- (4) That guidance counsellors continue to make every effort possible to assist students by identifying their educational goals and planning appropriate programs of studies and activities to meet their needs, by identifying difficulties in school progress and planning appropriate remedial steps, by identifying occupational aptitudes and planning appropriate orientation activities to develop interest;
- (5) That adequate provisions be made for financial aid to deserving students in the form of school bursaries, scholarships, and student loan funds, not only through federal, provincial, and municipal sources, but also through community and business organizations;
- (6) That local school boards undertake a well-planned program of public relations to make known the objectives and opportunities offered in the local schools, and to impress upon all members of the community the benefits to be derived from completing secondary education;
- (7) That adequate provisions be made for drop-outs to continue their formal education in night schools which would make available basic education courses as well as vocational, cultural and avocational subjects.

CHAPTER IX

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

Audio-visual aids may be defined as those devices by which a teacher, through an appeal to more than one of the senses, endeavours to clarify, establish, and correlate accurate concepts, interpretations, and appreciations. Audio-visual instruction is not a new concept and there is a wide variety of mediums and materials. The usefulness of blackboards, maps, bulletin boards, charts, flat pictures, graphs, cartoons and clippings, models, objects and specimens, tours and visits, and dramatization is usually taken for granted. The modern teacher can demonstrate with ease and conviction the value of record players, radio broadcasts, motion pictures, film strips, opaque projects, tape recorders and recently television in the classroom. The ever-present problem is to select those teaching aids most suitable for the purpose and to make the most effective use of them by making them available as and when they are needed to supplement the skill and ability of the teacher.

The film library of the Audio-Visual Aids Branch of the Department of Education contains a large number of motion pictures on a wide variety of topics, and we are appreciative of the fact that every effort is made to select for the centralized library films which are directly related to topics in the programs of study. Experience has demonstrated, however, that there are not sufficient copies of the sound films available to distribute them to all schools requesting them at one time. Rationing is practiced on the basis of first order received, first order filled; but we

have reason to believe that the rural schools are given a priority over urban schools. We are of the opinion that the solution to the problem lies in the provision of city-district and school-division film libraries at the expense of the provincial government.

In view of their lower cost as compared with sound films, and in order to have them more readily available for immediate use as a teaching aid, the Department of Education has encouraged the building of film strip libraries by individual schools through direct grants covering a portion of the initial purchase price. Similarly the purchase of projectors, screens, and other expensive equipment are subsidized by departmental grants to local school boards.

One of the most objectionable features of the present system of providing audio-visual aids is that local home and school associations with the assistance of the teaching staff have had to raise the money to pay one-third of the initial cost of expensive equipment which, by law, becomes the property of the school board. To add insult to injury, these same groups of interested persons have had to pay the insurance premiums on this equipment. There is, in our opinion, no justifiable reason why all types of school equipment should not be paid for out of the taxes levied for the specific purpose of providing adequate facilities for education. In this regard, it is worthy of note that the full cost of provincial and national school broadcasts are borne by the governments concerned.

We are also of the opinion that the use of low-powered television transmitters in the larger centers of population is to be desired. The transmitter is preferred over the closed-circuit system because of its inherent interest and utility to parents, adult students, and other viewers who are seeking programs of cultural value. Over half the cities in the United States had school broadcasts on television in 1955, employing them as a means of supplementing teaching, enriching curricula, educating pre-school and other housebound children, improving in-service teacher training, promoting better public relations, and so forth. Since even urban school boards could probably not afford to finance the installation of television facilities, the provincial government would have to meet the cost of this service. Once again it is worthy of note that the Department of Telephones budgets for the cost of operating the province's non-commercial radio station, CKUA.

The use of such audio-visual aids as radio, films and television must be evaluated in relation to effectiveness and cost. Under no circumstances should the regular programs of the schools be jeopardized by their indiscriminate use. Teachers need to know the correct function, proper use, and limitations of each type of teaching aid, and should be trained in its use. The training should be basic, and not designed to develop a high technical skill. For this purpose, in-service training in audio-visual education methods should be provided, including the use of films and film strips, projector operation, radio and recordings, and non-projected visual aids.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends:

- (1) that serious consideration be given to decentralization of the audio-visual aids library of the Department of Education through the establishment of local libraries of approved films and other teaching aids;
- (2) that the Audio-Visual Aids Branch continue to be responsible for the supervision, direction, and coordination of the provincial program of audio-visual education;
- (3) that approved local budgets for expenditures on equipment, insurance, and supplies for audio-visual education be included in operating costs of schools;
- (4) that developments in low-powered television transmission, and other technical advancements continue to receive careful study by the Department of Education in respect to their value and possible use in school broadcasts;
- (5) that the program for the professional preparation of teachers include instruction in the selection, use and evaluation of audio-visual and other teaching aids; and
- (6) that provision be made for the instruction of teachers in service in the effective utilization of audio-visual aids.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. wishes to

commend the Department of Education for its sincere attempts to negotiate recommended alterations and revisions as to adopt

CHAPTER X

TEXTBOOKS

The importance of having the best possible school books is obvious. Textbooks play an indispensable part in any system of group teaching. They economize effort for both pupil and teacher. Once it is in the possession of the student, the textbook may be used to prepare for, or to supplement, classroom instruction. It strongly influences the pupil's attitude toward a subject and contributes to his success or failure in the learning process. In the hands of the teacher, the **textbook** plus the curriculum guide provides both the content and the organization of the course.

However, a fixed course of study combined with a single textbook has a limiting effect. If a topic is not mentioned in the curriculum guide or is not in the textbook, both the teacher and the student tend to dismiss it as unimportant. Furthermore, a choice of subject matter and emphasis, which should depend to some extent on local conditions, cannot be readily achieved with a prescribed text, not even with the best one available. Changing interests, fresh information, new developments in methods or in the inter-relations of fields of knowledge demand freedom to make necessary adjustments. This is not possible when both the curriculum and the textbook are prescribed by a central authority for a long term of years. It should be noted that provisions in several school regulations prohibit teachers and students from using unauthorized textbooks.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. wishes to commend the Department of Education for its sincere attempts to negotiate recommended alterations and revisions so as to adapt

standard textbooks to the requirements of the course of study. We also wish to indicate our gratitude to the Department for sponsoring and supervising the preparation and publication of textbooks specifically written for use in Alberta schools. Furthermore, it is readily conceded that the present system of multiple authorizations in some subjects (that is, the listing of more than one authorized textbook for a subject or grade) has given the teachers a considerable degree of freedom of choice in the selection of the book or the series of books which they prefer.

However, the granting of full authority to the Department of Education to select, prescribe, authorize, recommend and approve all school books for each grade and subject, together with the establishment of the School Book Branch, has resulted in an extremely dangerous degree of centralized control over the supply of books to all schools in the province. Even though the selection of textbooks is made by committees appointed for the purpose, there is a definite tendency toward bureaucratic decisions being made with regard to the quality of scholarship that is reflected in the content of the books. Edmonton teachers are not satisfied with several of the prescribed textbooks which, in their opinion, "do not meet the needs of either students or teachers in the various grades and subject areas. Moreover, the departmental policy of purchasing school books under long-term contracts in order to ensure favorable prices by guaranteeing the publisher of an assured market for a period of up to eight years has resulted in a situation in which the revision or replacement of unsatisfactory textbooks is delayed unduly.

It is the considered opinion of the Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. that the departmental regulation which restricts all teachers to the "approved text" irrespective of the teacher's training, ability, or experience is detrimental to initiative and to experimentation in the introduction of new and better school books. The practice of keeping the same textbook for a term in excess of three years may be desirable from the point of view of economy in governmental expenditures, but the students and teachers should not be compelled to use an inferior text merely to effect a saving to a branch of the government, or to protect the vested interests of a publisher. The possibility that a book could be selected at any time would be an incentive to publishers to bring out new and better textbooks. Experience in other fields seems to indicate that if suitable books are not available immediately, they are quickly prepared by publishers to meet any expressed need. This incentive has been lacking under the static system of authorization in effect in this and other provinces.

All these considerations point to the desirability of according complete freedom of choice of books to the local authorities, as it is in England and in some parts of the United States. There is no dearth of suitable schoolbooks, and teachers should be free to make their own selection from the publisher's listings. The extent to which any one book is chosen is a fair measure of its relative merits. This freedom of choice should be restricted only by the requirement that books selected for use in classroom lots be approved by the administrative and supervisory staff employed by the local school board.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends:

- (a) that the existing system of authorizing textbooks for some specific subjects or grades to the exclusion of all other textbooks be replaced by a less rigid system under which teachers will be better able to adjust courses to meet local needs;
- (b) that the present system of distributing school books through a central government agency be discontinued;
- (c) that both single copies and class sets of textbooks, reference books, and supplementary reading books be provided by the local school board on the recommendation of the school principal in consultation with his staff;
- (d) that expenditures incurred for the purchase of all types of school books be included in the cost of operating the schools for purposes of computing grants from the Department of Education.

CHAPTER XI

SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICES

Books are the tools of basic education, and their importance cannot be overstressed. Although few elementary schools have the physical facilities for a central library, classroom libraries are possible regardless of the type of construction. The basic purpose of the classroom library is complementary to classroom instruction, and for the most part the books should be directly related to the activities of the pupils. While the effective use of the classroom library depends upon the interest and ability of the teacher, the extent of the reference material and supplementary reading material depends upon the amount of money allocated on a per classroom basis by the local school board. This Local is of the opinion that the present library services in many of our elementary schools is still inadequate.

Owing to the organization of classes it is advantageous to have the junior high school library centralized but in many of our schools the existing facilities are being utilized as classrooms. The basic purpose of the library at this level is to teach pupils to use reference books collaterally with their classroom instruction. The free-reading aspect of the literature course is a means of creating and fostering the wholesome development of the adolescent through vicarious experience. The quality of library service in the junior high schools varies with the interest of the principal and the teachers, but is mainly dependent upon the degree of financial support they receive from the local school board. This Local is of the opinion that

the general level of library service in our junior high schools is far from being satisfactory.

When high school students go directly from school to the work-a-day world in which they have to earn a living, they enter on a period of their lives in which they tend to discard everything associated with their school work. If books are unknown to them except as educational tools, then books also are likely to be discarded. It has been proven beyond doubt that with skilled and unobtrusive guidance most young people can readily acquire the habit of reading for reading's sake and acquire a lasting respect for good books.

It cannot be expected, however, that classroom teachers should know the content of the thousands of hand-picked books which should form the constantly changing stock of an adequate library for a composite high school. Nor has the teacher the time or opportunity to evaluate the flood of books published each year. This is a teacher-librarian's job, for which they should be specially trained in university library-training schools. The book knowledge of the teacher-librarian is no less important than the books in the central library of the composite high school.

Although high school libraries do exist, they are often employed as study halls in addition to their primary function. The members of this Local doubt whether the two uses can ever be successfully combined, and we fear that inevitably the study hall will submerge the library. It is highly probable that there would be a substantial improvement in the efficiency of the library services if the teacher-librarians were permitted to concentrate on the preparation of high

school students for voluntary continuance throughout life of education through the medium of the printed page.

There is no doubt in the minds of the teachers that the library services at the various school levels are in need of considerable expansion. School and classroom libraries are not equipped to undertake their allotted task satisfactorily because they are inadequately financed.

The Edmonton Public School Local of the A.T.A. recommends:

- (1) That expenditures for reference and recreational reading books be increased in order to facilitate the maintenance of adequate library services at all levels of the school system;
- (2) That central school libraries be in charge of persons certificated both as teachers and librarians;
- (3) That physical facilities designed for central school libraries not be used for classrooms or study halls.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

The Edmonton Public School Local has deemed it advisable to rely upon the comprehensive brief of the Alberta Teachers' Association for the presentation of statements of official policy regarding the provincial aspect of the school system in Alberta. For the most part, we have confined our observations to a survey of articulate opinion regarding those aspects of elementary and secondary education which are of special concern to the teachers employed by the Edmonton Public School Board. Being aware of the Commissioners' expressed desire not to review material of a similar nature submitted by a number of identical organizations, we respectfully refer the Commission to the brief from our central organization for information and recommendations relating to the various special services, the organization of schools in non-urban areas, the physical facilities, the quality and supply of teachers, the requirements of industry and the community, and the economics of education.

Throughout this brief, we have expressed confidence in the collective and individual ability of professional educators to institute desirable modifications to and adaptations of the provincial program of studies at the local level, especially in the large urban schools. In the belief that the main role of the central provincial authority is to provide adequate supervision of the educational system as a whole and to equalize educational opportunity, we have advocated that local authorities be permitted to exercise a greater degree of autonomy in order to provide scope for

zeal and ability in the improvement of the local educational environment. We wish to reiterate, at this point, our firm faith in the response of professional teachers, supervisors and administrators to the increased responsibility which such a policy of decentralization would place upon them. The method and detail to be followed in implementing this objective can be determined only by a much more exhaustive inquiry than we have had time to make.

In making our various recommendations, we have tried to maintain a balance of emphasis between the more desirable features of present reality and the practicable possibilities of improvement. It is certain that the views of the membership of this Local will change in the future, as they have changed in the past; therefore, we do not regard the opinions expressed in this brief as necessarily final. Nevertheless, we believe that the proposals made in this brief are accepted widely among our membership and have an obvious bearing on the future welfare of education in Edmonton.

Content - method - organization.

~~accredited schools.~~

basic program - least standards.

accredited schools.

eg. of autonomy.

autonomy of programming, etc. . . .

interprise

grammar

Sec. Stud.

Phys. Sc.

drill spreads.

pressure of numbers

give each child

a chance in

our old program.

retardation ?

Years ago students required clear passes in
all subjects or failed the whole grade.

This has changed; many account for
that we have many weak students, in
high school grades, in specific subjects.

IDEA: we should call in the High School Inspectors
for conference on small schools, limitations of
programs, autonomy, etc. . . .

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